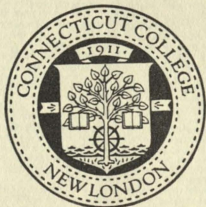


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SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGION - 1968





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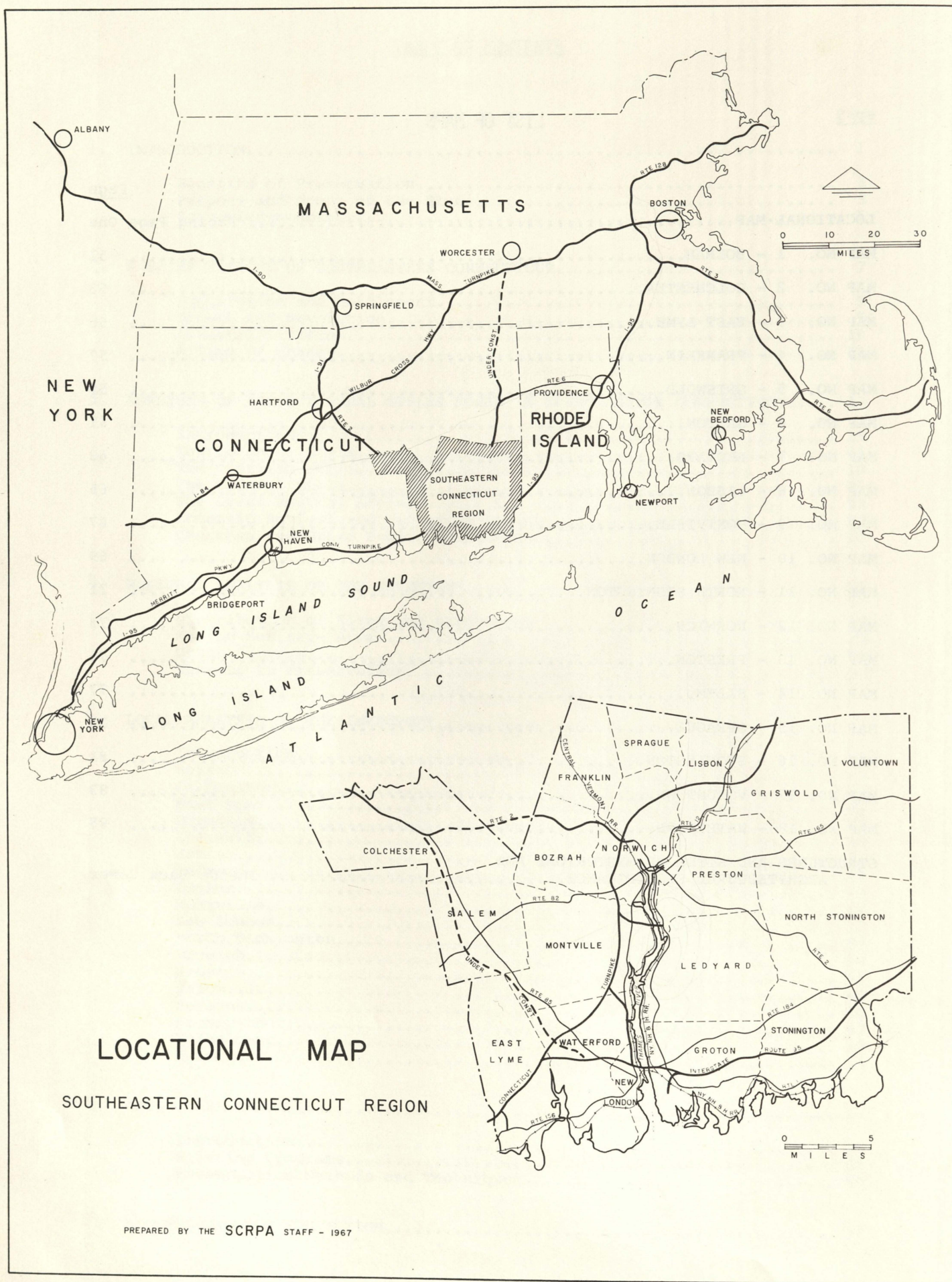
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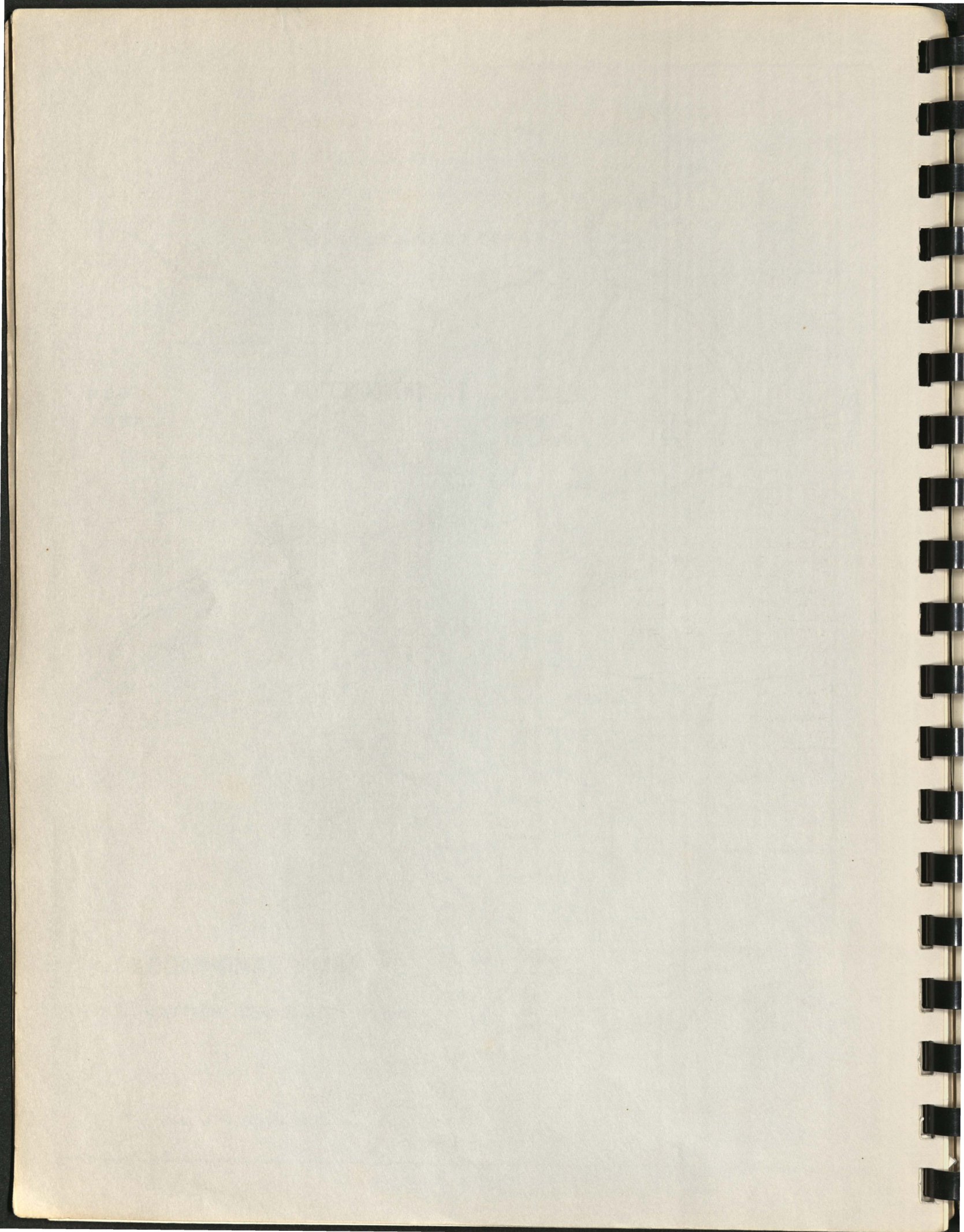






## 1. INTRODUCTION







## BENEFITS OF PRESERVATION

In this age of rapid growth and change, we often fail to see, or simply take for granted, the alteration, slow deterioration or sudden destruction of buildings that have been a part of the scene for centuries. As a result, these old structures are disappearing at a rapid rate, and the features which for so long have added a measure of quality and distinction to our environment and linked us to our past are in danger of becoming rarities.

Recognition that historic preservation is important to the spiritual welfare of the Nation is increasing rapidly. The preamble to the National Historic Preservation Act, passed by Congress in 1966, states that "the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people." Things from the past serve as reminders to work toward lasting and worthwhile goals. They make us aware of the struggles and sacrifices of our forefathers to build a strong and stable country. Old homes, churches, barns, stone fences, abandoned cellar holes and other ruins stimulate the imaginations of both young and old and recall to mind the founding and formative days of our present society.

Historic preservation also has great educational value. A few hours of browsing in New London's Shaw Mansion and Hempstead House, East Lyme's Thomas Lee House, Stonington's Denison Homestead, or Norwich's Leffingwell Inn can vividly illustrate much about the life of our country's first settlers. A day at Mystic Seaport affords a better understanding of 19th century New England's social and economic life than can ever be gained from books and lectures on the subject. A brief stroll through Stonington Village or Norwichtown cannot fail to impress and enlighten any student of history or architecture.

Preservation of historic buildings can add a distinctive mark of quality to a community. Many towns in Southeastern Connecticut are generously sprinkled with fine old buildings that give considerable character to the whole region. Such attributes give pride to the local residents and promote interest in other civic affairs, thus contributing to a

better community in general.

Not the least among the benefits of historic preservation are the potentials for economic returns. The growing interest in historical sites and events accounts for much of today's tourism. And tourists mean money. The more visitors we can attract to this area, the more diversified our economy becomes and the less we have to depend upon defense activities for our economic well-being.

Visitors to the region spend money for a wide range of items. They buy food, lodging, souvenirs, fuel for cars and boats, fishing and boating equipment, and bait; they pay admission to various attractions, which in turn support administrative and maintenance personnel; and they pay for a host of other services in the region's many commercial and professional establishments.

Estimates of tourist expenditures have been made by various agencies throughout the country. A recent survey of out-of-state visitors to Connecticut revealed that the average visitor spends \$21.62 while in the state.\* During the course of this 80-day survey, conducted in the summer of 1966, 9,582,900 visitors spent \$207,247,000 in Connecticut. When we consider that these transients require only a fraction of the municipal services supported by local taxes, they represent an even greater economic gain.

Mystic Seaport is a classic example of the effects of historic preservation on tourism. Visitors to the Seaport now exceed 400,000 each year, making it by far the most popular tourist attraction in Connecticut. A survey of visitors to the Seaport, conducted by SCRPA in cooperation with the Marine Historical Association in 1964, led to the conclusion that in a year's time, all Seaport visitors spend almost \$6,000,000 in this area.

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This report stresses the importance of historic preservation considerations in the regional and local planning process. It presents a regional view of the very large number of historically and architecturally significant buildings and sites in Southeastern Connecticut.

\* Hempel, Donald J. Nonresident Vacation Travel in Connecticut, Summer, 1966. School of Business Administration, University of Connecticut, 1967.



cut and discusses the needs, opportunities and methods for preserving this heritage. It is hoped that the material presented here will stimulate and encourage individuals and organizations throughout Southeastern Connecticut to greater efforts and more varied activities in the field of historic preservation. A study of this type, completed in only six months and covering a 560-square-mile region, cannot possibly include all that is pertinent to historic preservation in Southeastern Connecticut. The final effort toward actual preservation must originate at the local level and must involve individual property owners and other interested residents. Local talent is needed to produce the detailed historical information on sites, structures, families, and events, all of which should have a bearing on the local preservation effort. Residents of each municipality have a more intimate knowledge of local attitudes and interests, a factor which is needed to establish priorities for preservation projects.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the need for local involvement in historic preservation planning is the necessity for making this a continuing effort. It should be the responsibility of the local groups to conduct research, develop a historic preservation program, and follow through on its implementation. SCRPA and other non-local organizations are not equipped to give the continuing detailed attention needed to produce a meaningful preservation effort.

The basic inventory for this report was conducted primarily by the SCRPA staff and its consultant for this study, Russell J. Wright. The entire region was surveyed by automobile and information was plotted on U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps.\* All structures that could be identified from the roadway as being reasonably good examples of any of the major architectural styles described in Chapter 3 of this report were mapped. To the extent possible, structures that were missed in the initial survey were added after discussions with representatives of local historical commissions or other locally knowledgeable persons. However, those buildings suggested by local persons had to conform to the standard that they be good examples from their particular archi-

tectural period before they were added to the inventory.

The limitations of this approach are readily apparent. First, the uniformity of the data is tempered by the subjective nature of the survey. Whether or not a structure was included in the initial inventory depended upon the interpretation of its design by the person conducting the survey. Second, some structures not visible from improved roads may have been missed in the field survey and subsequently overlooked in the local review. Third, a determination of the historical importance of a structure could not always be made by those making the survey, with the result that the inventory is concerned more with historical architecture than with history. After discussions with local people, items of greater than local historical significance were also added to the inventory, regardless of their architectural merit.

The staff of the Connecticut Historical Commission also assisted in the regional inventory by making the state's inventory available to SCRPA. The state inventory, although differing in scope from town to town and incomplete in some areas, served as an additional check on the regional inventory.

The Norwich data was gathered by a team of knowledgeable local residents headed by architect Frederick C. Biebesheimer, III, and including Mrs. Catherine Doroshevich, Mrs. Marion O'Keefe, and architect Padmakar V. Karve. The additional assistance for Norwich was warranted by the very large number of architecturally important buildings found in several concentrations and scattered throughout the city, making the survey approach used in the other towns somewhat impractical. Furthermore, the State Historical Commission had as yet been unable to gather any inventory material on Norwich. Mr. Biebesheimer also assisted in the inventory of structures in New London.

Gerhard Amt of the Agency's staff was primary author of this report. He was assisted by Richard Erickson, who wrote Chapter 2, and Russell Wright, who wrote Chapter 3. Mr. Wright also provided advice on the content and presentation of the entire report.

\* The field maps for this inventory are available for use in the SCRPA office.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In addition to those already mentioned, many other persons gave advice and information to those conducting this study. SCRPA gratefully acknowledges the following individuals for their cooperation and assistance: Robert L. Bachman, Waterford Historical Society; Attorney Arthur Barrows, New London; Mrs. Barbara Brown, Colchester Historical Society; Mrs. Eva Butler, Indian and Colonial Research Center, Old Mystic; Herbert Darbee, Connecticut Historical Commission; David DeWolfe, Connecticut Highway Department; Henry Fortin, Sprague; Mr. & Mrs. Donald Fraser, Salem; <sup>Wgh</sup> Mrs. Joan Friedland, Lisbon Historical Society; Marshall Ginther, Chamber of Commerce of Southeastern Connecticut; Mrs. Marion Hall, Preston Historical Society; Joseph Hickey, State Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources;

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2. A BRIEF HISTORY OF  
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT



A WHITE PAPER OF  
SOUTHEASTERN CONSTITUTION



Although Southeastern Connecticut's development has been marked by few truly momentous events, the region's history has had a profound impact on the style and grouping of buildings at various points in time. This chapter provides an outline of the historical setting in which the buildings described in succeeding chapters were built and used.

## EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT

When Adrian Block reconnoitered Connecticut's shore for the Dutch in 1614, Southeastern Connecticut was dominated by two Indian tribes -- the Pequots and the Mohegans. Whether the Indians felt any great distress at the sight of Block's small "Restless" is not recorded, but they were to enjoy another two undisturbed decades before experiencing the pressure of land-hungry whites.

The earliest white settlement to influence the Southeastern section of Connecticut occurred in 1635 at Saybrook, just to the west of this region. Saybrook, located strategically at the mouth of the Connecticut River, for many years was more a fort than a settlement. Its founder was Lt. Lion Gardiner, a military engineer sent out by John Winthrop, Jr., even then growing restless in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The Pequots along Southeastern Connecticut's coast became increasingly dissatisfied with the growing English presence and particularly with the Saybrook settlement. With primitive directness, they initiated a series of depredations in the 1630's that led to a full-scale Indian war. The Pequot War began in earnest in the summer of 1637 when Connecticut's General Court created a small army under the command of Captain John Mason to chastise the Indians. Mason did his work well. The Pequots were routed from their fort at Mystic with overwhelming losses, harried across the state to a swamp in Fairfield, and there decimated as they tried desperately to break through the ring of English muskets. In a single swift campaign, the Pequot War destroyed the one serious threat to settlement in Southeastern Connecticut.

In spite of this, another eight years passed before a permanent settlement was established in the region. It was in 1645/46 that John Winthrop, Jr., son of the great Massachusetts leader, founded "Pequot," which would be renamed "New London" in 1658. Winthrop had an excellent eye for picking a good community

site. New London's advantages were many: It was Connecticut's best harbor, was at the junction of the Thames (then the Pequot) River and Long Island Sound, and occupied moderately rolling ground, healthy and suitable for cultivation.

From this beginning, Southeastern Connecticut grew slowly. A small settlement was started in the Town of Stonington in 1649, and ten years later Uncas, Chief of the Mohegans and a consistent friend of the English, sold land at the head of the Thames River to a group breaking away from the Saybrook colony. The following summer, in 1660, under the leadership of the Reverend James Fitch and the Pequot War hero John Mason, these settlers established Norwich. Their homes were built in what is now called Norwichtown, some two miles northwest of the heart of the present city.

From the first settlement into the early part of the 18th century, life depended almost exclusively on subsistence agriculture. A report from Connecticut to the English Committee for Trade and Foreign Plantations in 1680 noted that Connecticut's surplus agricultural and forest products were shipped to Boston, "& there Bartered for Cloathing." Only a minor amount of trading was done in these early times with the West Indies to obtain sugar, cotton, and rum. This same report lists only 20 "petty" merchants in the entire colony and a scant 27 vessels, the largest of which was 90 tons. New London by this time was considered to be one of the four most important communities in the colony.

Non-agricultural activities were limited to those simple industries needed to process local products, to a small amount of shipbuilding, to small scale trading, and to fishing. As early as 1650 New London had a water-powered grist mill to grind the grain of nearby farmers. And in 1664 shipbuilding, which today dominates the region's economy, began in New London.

## GROWTH AND REVOLUTION

Southeastern Connecticut's economy and population continued to grow into the 18th century. By 1774, three of the region's towns were among the six largest communities in Connecticut. Norwich ranked second only to Hartford in size, with 7,327 inhabitants; New London was fourth, with 5,888; and Stonington was sixth, with 5,412.



Small farms still employed most able-bodied men. But a more diversified economy, leading to the accumulation of wealth, was slowly emerging. Local entrepreneurs ventured their small capital in an amazing variety of trading and industrial projects. Christopher Leffingwell of Norwich was typical: In 1766 he opened a small manufactory to produce stockings and founded a paper mill, apparently the first in Connecticut. And in 1770 he expanded his operations to include a fulling mill, a dye house, and a chocolate processing mill.

Similar men of moderate means and immoderate courage were active throughout the region. Iron foundries, clock making shops, potash works, potteries, rope walks, and shipyards opened in Bozrah, Yantic, Stonington, Mystic, and New London. The industries of the 18th century, small and unsophisticated though they were, were creating the wealth, the managerial skills, and the industrial labor pool from which the large-scale industrialization of the next century would evolve.

Around the middle of the 18th century, the emphasis in farming shifted from such crops as rye, oats, and barley to livestock and their products. Beef, pork, horses, oxen, swine, poultry, sheep, and cheese found favorable markets in the islands of the West Indies. This trade developed steadily during the 18th century and did much to increase the role of Southeastern Connecticut's coastal settlements and Norwich as commercial centers.

The start of hostilities with England in 1775 quickly broke the trading routine developed between Southeastern Connecticut and the West Indies. Surplus farm products were now absorbed by the war effort, and the British Navy soon made trading ventures too hazardous for all but the most daring merchant.

Shrewd Yankees very early in the war realized that idle ships and seamen could be put to highly profitable and socially acceptable use as privateers. Stonington, Mystic, and New London all were home ports for privateers, and New London was by far the most important privateering port in Connecticut. In the course of the war, approximately 300 captured vessels sailed into New London harbor under prize crews.

This success did not go unnoticed by the British, and in the early fall of 1781 they organized a punitive raid against New London. On the morning of September 6th a combined British and Tory force led by Benedict Arnold, who

forty years earlier had been born in nearby Norwich, landed on both the east and west banks of the Thames River. After a short but severe struggle, the British column east of the river captured Ft. Griswold, New London's chief defense. Following the surrender of the fort by Colonel William Ledyard, he and about 80 of his men were wantonly killed by the victorious British troops. Meanwhile, the British column west of the river, led personally by Arnold, rapidly advanced into New London after brushing aside light American resistance. New London was looted and about 130 buildings were burned to the ground. The small village of Groton on the east bank of the Thames River was also burned by the British before they withdrew.

Economically, the Revolutionary War was disastrous for Southeastern Connecticut. Prices soared, the value of currency dropped, connections with foreign buyers and suppliers were cut, and raw materials were either unavailable or high priced. In New London the assessed value of property declined by 20% between 1774 and 1782, partially as a result of Arnold's raid. In Norwich property values declined by 13% during this period. Population growth stagnated in both towns throughout the war.

## INDUSTRIALIZATION

The 19th century was a period of tremendous economic growth and change and of substantial population growth in Southeastern Connecticut. As the century opened, the region was still chiefly an agricultural area with a small but growing industrial and commercial sector in its economy. By the close of the century, the region would be dependent primarily on industry as a source of employment. The increase in Southeastern Connecticut's population from 31,622 in 1800 to 79,307 in 1900 testifies to the profound effect of this economic shift.

Early in the century the region's businessmen looked to the sea. Shipbuilding, depressed by the Revolutionary War, revived, and names like Mystic, Stonington, and Noank became synonymous with well-built vessels. Back in 1784 the "Rising Sun" rode the tide out of New London harbor in search of whales, the first of a long line of whalers who were to follow for another century and a quarter.

In this region, New London and Stonington were the leading whaling ports. New London was third only to New Bedford



and Nantucket as a whaling port during the mid-century peak of whaling, and at its height New London was home port to 79 whale ships. Whaling also brought fame to Stonington in 1821 when young Nathaniel Palmer, captain of a whaler from that port, made the first recorded sighting of the Antarctic Continent.

The War of 1812 played havoc with the region's shipping and whaling interests. Once again the British mounted a raid against a local coastal settlement. This time the blow fell on the Village of Stonington. On August 9, 1814, a small British fleet appeared off Stonington and commenced a three-day naval siege, during which they fired some 60 tons of cannonballs into the village. All attempts of the British to land were repulsed, and on August 12th they withdrew.

Inland, the textile industry developed at suitable water power sites on the many streams flowing through the region. A number of small woolen mills were operating by the turn of the century, but it was 1810 before the first cotton mill was built. This pioneer venture, located at Jewett City, was followed in the next decade by nine other cotton mills. As the century progressed, textiles -- including such related processes as yarn and thread making, bleaching, dyeing, and apparel making -- dominated the region's economy. Other significant manufacturing industries during the 19th century were firearms, paper, printing, and the construction of machinery.

Throughout the 19th century Southeastern Connecticut's transportation facilities were improving. As early as 1792 a turnpike had been authorized between New London and Norwich. This was the second turnpike in the nation and was only the first of a series of improvements to the area's overland transportation system. Waterways had always been important avenues of communication. Sail packets linked the region to New York, Providence, and Boston in the 18th century and into the 19th century, but beginning in 1817 they had to compete with regularly scheduled steamboats. By 1840 a railroad connected steamboats arriving at Norwich to Worcester and Boston, Massachusetts. Before the end of the century railroads had been extended to even the smaller industrial villages.

Generally, the Civil War had a positive effect on business and industry in this region. Although the cotton mills suffered from uncertain or non-existent supplies, the area's woolen mills, arms manufacturers, iron works, and shipyards

were booming.

The most distinctive physical characteristic of the industrialization of the last century was the creation around key water power sites of small mill villages. Dominated by a well-constructed mill reflecting the pride and confidence of its owner, the villages usually contained company-owned housing for the mill hands, a company store, a church, and the fine home of the mill's owner or manager. Mill villages producing a variety of products were built in Fitchville, Glasgow, Baltic, Hanover, Taftville, Occum, Hallville, Montville, Yantic, Jewett City, Voluntown, and Gilman. These villages were a distinctive response to the needs of their time, and as much as any physical object can, they testify to the social attitudes and economic conditions of the 19th century. Their like will not be built again.

Returns from manufacturing, whaling, shipping, and commerce were generous to many men of courage and talent. From the first to the last days of the past century, this growing personal wealth found expression in fine homes reflecting the success of their owners. In Norwich and New London and in many coastal and inland villages men of means built homes of substance in which they could be understandably proud.

## A TIME OF CHANGE

Events of the 20th century sharply altered the well-ordered stability of the 19th century mill villages. As the seventh decade of the 20th century draws to a close, only a vestige of the textile industry which dominated the region's economy in 1900 remains. Changes in fashion, less costly operating conditions in other parts of the nation, and foreign competition all contributed to the severe decline in textiles. Particularly since World War II, defense activities have supplanted textiles as the region's leading employer. Together, the United States Navy and Coast Guard and the Electric Boat Division of General Dynamics account for nearly three-fourths of all employment in Southeastern Connecticut. It was at the Electric Boat plant on the Thames River that "Nautilus," the world's first atomic submarine, was launched in 1954.

Whaling is still a money-maker, but as a tourist attraction. The whaler "Charles W. Morgan" is the prime feature at Mystic Seaport, which itself is the most popular tourist stop in Connecticut.



Changes in the economy have produced equally significant shifts in the region's population. In total number the area now has about 208,000 inhabitants, and most of these have long since abandoned the small, compact mill villages for suburban living. Between redevelop-

ment of older communities and the suburban population surge, Southeastern Connecticut's physical and cultural landscape is now changing more rapidly than at any time since John Winthrop the younger first stepped ashore at New London nearly three and a quarter centuries ago.



3. ANALYSIS OF ARCHITECTURAL  
STYLES FOUND IN SOUTHEASTERN  
CONNECTICUT







## INTRODUCTION

As previously stated, one of the primary purposes of this study is to stimulate and provoke continued research and analysis of the vast historical and architectural legacy that exists in the Southeastern Connecticut Region. Towards this end, and as a means of facilitating and encouraging detailed surveys of each town and borough on a local basis, this chapter discusses in some detail the evolution and identifying characteristics of the various architectural styles and periods to be found in the study area. The plans, photographs and descriptions that follow are drawn from existing structures within the region and will serve as guides to those interested in protecting the visual and historic character of their respective communities. And since the bulk of the buildings inventoried as part of this study were houses, the emphasis in style descriptions will be on the domestic architecture of the region.

Since the original settling of the region in the 1640's, five major architectural styles in domestic building have been developed - (1) the Colonial, (2) the Georgian, (3) the Federal, (4) the Greek Revival, and (5) the Romantic Revival and Victorian. Within these general styles, many sub-styles exist, and in some instances overlap. It is this variety within the major styles that contributes to the architectural quality and continuity that must be identified, recorded and protected. Each of the five major styles and their sub-categories will be discussed in chronological order, beginning with the 17th century one-room house and ending with the Richardsonian or Romanesque Revival, which extends into the late 1890's.

### THE COLONIAL STYLE\*

The Colonial style of domestic building, which includes the earliest houses of the region and continues through to the simple farm houses of the 1780's,

can be conveniently divided into six major phases.

The first of these phases is the one-room house of the middle and late 17th century. Usually one and one-half stories in height, the plan of the house was dominated by a massive chimney in one end wall. Although no houses of this plan remain in an unaltered state, the region is fortunate in that it possesses two of the most important surviving examples of this type in the original portions of both the Thomas Lee House in East Lyme and the Hempstead House in New London. The Lee House, begun in 1664, was added to in three stages, as illustrated on the following page. The house began as a simple one-room dwelling, with the chimney forming part of the west wall. In the second stage, a similar room was added to the west of the chimney, which had a second hearth cut into it at this time. Finally, a three-room lean-to was added to provide a kitchen and pantry and the chimney was rebuilt where the stairs were formerly located. The Hempstead House, begun in 1678, evolved in much the same manner, and both of these houses are representative of the extremely plain, practical style of building that was carried on by the earliest settlers in the region.

J. Frederick Kelly attributes this austerity to the fact that as the "Colonists were never free from the menace of wolf, famine, or lurking Indian, there was never time for anything non-essential nor place for anything flimsy and impermanent. The staunch houses which they built unconsciously expressed these circumstances in every timber of their tremendous frames."\*\*

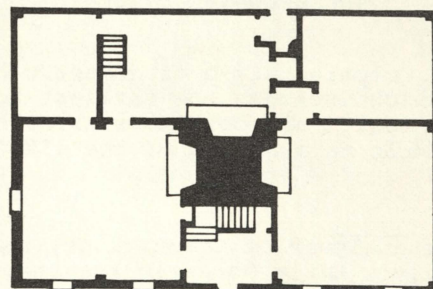
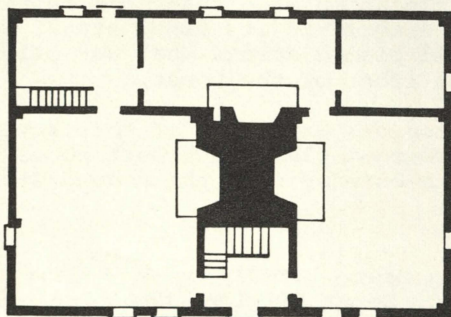
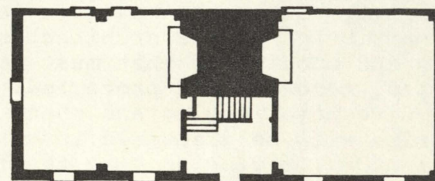
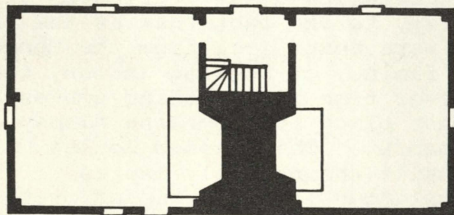
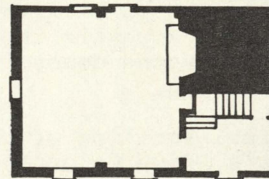
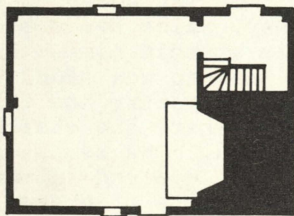
Both of these houses faced south, which was typical of the 17th century houses, but the Lee House, because of the relocation of a road, was reoriented to face north in its final stage, with the ell placed across what was originally the front of the house.

A logical extension of this style was the two-room plan, with both rooms flanking the chimney, and the second stages of

\* The analysis of Colonial styles in this section is based largely on J. Frederick Kelly's Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut, Dover Edition, New York, 1963. Although Kelly's "phases" of Colonial architecture have been criticized lately, the work has been used as a reference in the preparation of this report because of its clear description of early Connecticut architecture. In this report we are primarily concerned with the identification of styles rather than with their precise dating.

\*\* Ibid., p. 2.





1: Thomas Lee House, begun in 1664, East Lyme; and first-floor plan evolution, after Kelly.

2: Hempstead House, begun in 1678, New London; and first-floor plan evolution, after Kelly.



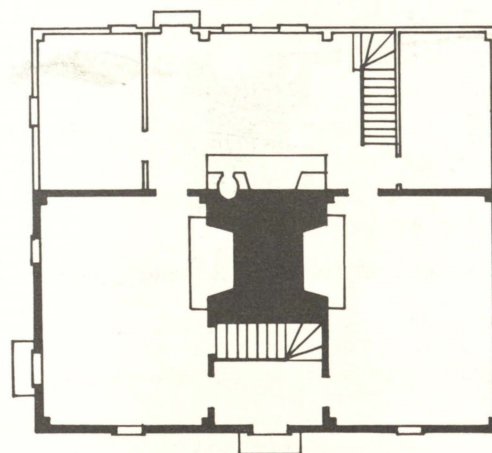
both the Lee and the Hempstead Houses serve as examples of this type of plan.

The second phase of Colonial building was the two and one-half story, two-room-deep plan. The plan revolves around the central chimney which incorporates a fireplace for each of the three rooms on the first floor. Excellent examples of this type exist throughout the region, and include most of the rural houses that dot the countryside, such as houses on Blue Hill Road in Bozrah and Rathbun Hill Road in Salem.



3: Center-chimney plan house on Rathbun Hill Road, Salem.

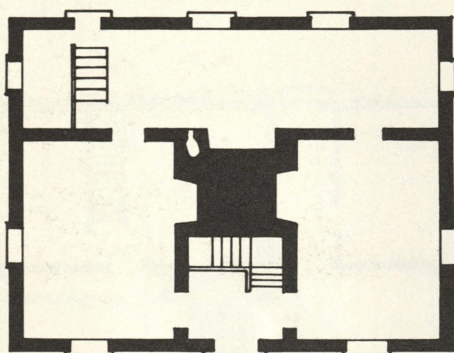
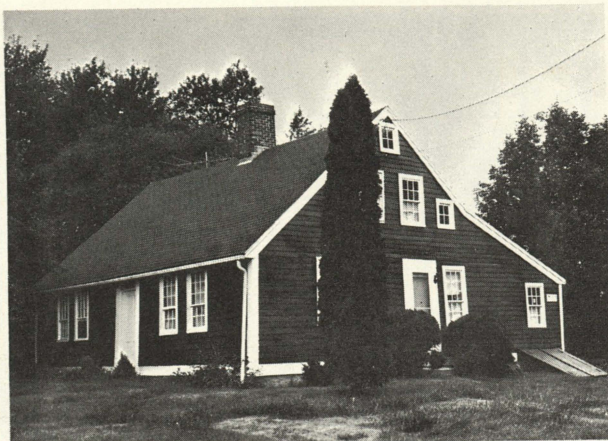
The third phase was actually created by adding a rear ell to an existing two-room plan house of earlier vintage. This simple attempt to gain extra space gave us one of the most distinctive early American architectural building forms - the Saltbox. In almost all of the early Saltbox houses the rear ell contained the kitchen, a "borning" room and a pantry. Often, an enclosed rear stair to the upper sleeping quarters was also included. The original version of the Saltbox had the lean-to addition framed into the existing structure, and this is evidenced by a break in the roof line, where the pitch of the ell is usually raised to provide head room. Many variations of the Saltbox house exist, including a second addition to the lean-to, and finally the rear ell or lean-to was built as part of the original house. In this later example, there is usually no break in the roof line, but this is not always the case. Excellent examples of the Saltbox can be found along Chestnut Hill Road in Colchester (1717) and on Potash Hill Road in Sprague.



4: "Saltbox" house on Potash Hill Road, Sprague; and first-floor plan of a similar house, after Kelly.

The fourth phase of Colonial building is the one and one-half story, two-room-deep cottage. Nostalgically referred to as the Cape Cod, this cottage style can be found throughout New England and is the simplest of all the Colonial Houses. Primarily a product of the late 17th and 18th centuries, the plan consists of a central chimney with a room on either side and a long narrow room to the rear. Notable examples of the Cape Cod include a 1684 cottage on Pleasant Valley Road in Groton, a later cottage on Wylie School Road in Voluntown, and in its final form, with a separate kitchen wing, the Bailey House just east of Ayers Gap in Franklin.





5: "Cape Cod Cottage" on Pleasant Valley Road, Groton; and first-floor plan of a similar house, after Williams.

The "garrison" Colonial is the fifth phase, but the usual front overhang of this style has been discarded in this region or is limited to overhangs in the gable end. A good example of the gable-end overhang is found on a house on Scott Hill Road in Bozrah.



6: House with typical gable-end overhang, Scott Hill Road, Bozrah.

Many variations of the above five basic types exist in the region. Some of the houses began as "half houses" or "three-quarter houses," which were intended to be completed as typical central chimney plan houses. The "half house," an example of which is located on Hewitt Road in North Stonington, consisted of either a pair of rooms or a single room on one side of the chimney, and resembles in plan the earliest one-room houses of the settlers. The "three-



7: "Half house" on Hewitt Road, North Stonington.

quarter house," such as the Lord Tavern, built in 1760 in Norwichtown, was built with one large room and one smaller room flanking the central chimney. Many of these houses had a rear lean-to added at a later date. The use of the hip roof was experimented with during this time, usually with a single chimney piercing the middle of the roof as in the 1717 house on the north side of Raymond Hill Road in Montville, but this roof form was soon discarded and did not reappear until the late Georgian and Federal periods.

The central chimney plan continued as the most common type of dwelling until the middle of the 18th century, when it was replaced by a more workable and convenient layout, which brought about the transitional phase of Colonial building.

The sixth and final phase of Colonial building is the center hall plan. The typical room arrangement of this period consisted of a wide hall extending the entire depth of the house, from the centered front door to a rear secondary door. This rear door often led to the kitchen, which was almost always included in a separate wing to the rear of the main house. The large single chimney of

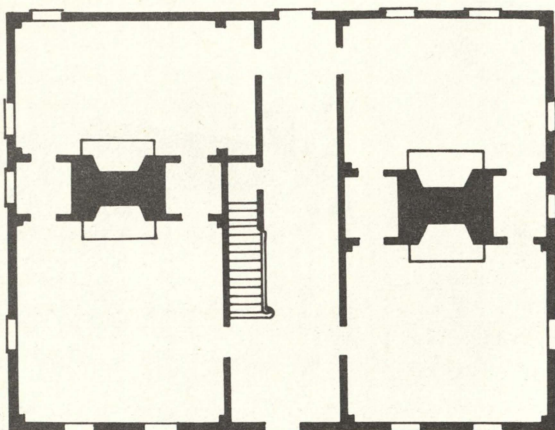


the central chimney plan has been replaced by a pair of chimneys which serve the double rooms on either side of the center hall. In plan, the center hall house resembles two central chimney plan houses joined together on the long side by the center hall. This does not carry through in elevation, however, since the center hall house retains the ridge line along the longitudinal axis. An interesting variation of this joining together of two central chimney plan houses occurs along Route 1 at the top of Ft. Hill in Groton, where it appears that two central chimney plan houses have been linked end to end.

The center hall plan is the beginning of the formal, balanced plan which will continue through the Georgian period, and is almost the only plan in use between 1750 and the turn of the century.



8: Center-hall plan house on Ross Hill Road, Lisbon; and first-floor plan of a similar house, after Kelly.



The gambrel-roofed house is also included in this phase of building. The gambrel-roofed house originated in the 1750's, and takes a variety of forms. The Calkins house, built prior to 1790 in Norwich, is a good example of a gambrel-roofed house with a lean-to addition, resembling a Saltbox in character. Many other gambrel-roofed houses are scattered throughout the region.



9: Gambrel-roofed house on Main Street, Stonington Village.

The central chimney and center hall plan houses were the most common houses built in this Colonial period in the region, and variations such as gable-end chimney plans and the more elaborate Dutch and Flemish Colonial plans that flourished in the Hudson Valley were the exception and not the rule of Colonial buildings in Southeastern Connecticut. With the advent of the center hall plan, domestic architecture began a state of transition to the more formal and elaborate building form known as Georgian.

## THE GEORGIAN STYLE

Reflecting an expanding and growing economy and an increased sense of security, the Georgian house is the first form of domestic architecture in the United States to introduce classical forms and motifs into the overall design. The difference between the earlier Colonial style of building discussed above and the Georgian style has been termed "the difference between folk art and classical design,"\* and this is an apt

\* Williams, Henry Lionel and Ottalie K. A Guide to Old American Houses, 1700-1900. New York, 1962, p. 67.



description of the changes that were taking place in the beginning of the 18th century. Spanning the entire century, the Georgian period is usually broken down into three phases, Early, Middle, and Late or Post Colonial.

Early Georgian began around 1700 and continued until the 1750's. In plan, many of the early houses of this period were of the Colonial central chimney or center hall varieties, with one distinguishing feature -- the wide paneled, often very ornate, door. Above the door, a row of lights was usually placed in the transom, or in some cases in the door itself, and the entire doorway may have been enclosed by flanking pilasters of Doric, Ionic, Corinthian or composite orders. Crowning the entrance in the earlier form of Georgian was either a molded cap, or more often a broken scroll or segmental pediment. The roof was a low gable, with some use of the gambrel roof at a later date. The traditional plain eaves of the Colonial period were replaced by a classic cornice, which, with the door, are the most distinguishing features of the style.

Many houses of Colonial design were adapted to this new feeling of classical design by the simple addition of a new door, window frames capped with small, flat cornices, giving the visual effect of an architrave, and a finely detailed cornice. As many of the earlier Georgian houses were constructed during the same period that the center hall plan was emerging, it is often quite difficult to differentiate between the Colonial with added trim and the true Early Georgian, but in visual appeal they are of equal value. Examples of this first stage of Georgian building include a house on Harvey Road in Stonington.



10: Early Georgian house on Harvey Road, Stonington.

The middle phase of Georgian began in the 1750's and ended with the Revolutionary War. Retaining the central chimney and center hall plans, detailing reflected academic trends developed in England and spread to the Colonies in the form of a number of "Builder's Handbooks." Georgian houses became more imposing, but the entrance continued as the most important visual element with a triangular pediment replacing the scroll or segmented pediment of the earlier stage. The Corinthian order was little used in this period, and almost all of the pilasters were of Doric or Ionic detail. This is the beginning of the transitional form of Georgian that continued until 1800, where the complex mouldings and elaborate pediments and cornices were replaced with more massive, simpler, yet still classical, forms. Most of the very ornate doorways that we see in the region, with their flowing "swan neck" or broken pediments are of this period, which contributed so much to the character of the region.

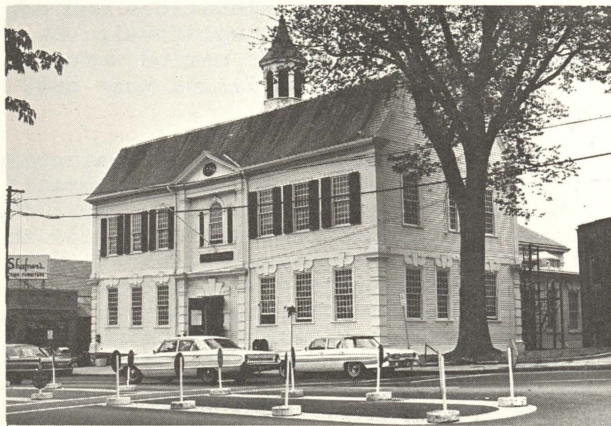
The Late or Post Colonial phases of Georgian began at the close of the Revolution and merged with the Federal style, which made its appearance around the turn of the century. Typical of this phase of building was the geometric facade, conservative in design except for fenestration which now included the elliptical fan window and, more importantly, the Palladian window, usually found directly over the front doorway. In many cases, the middle of the front facade projected forward, and was framed by pilasters which extended the full height of the building. An excellent example of this development is the house on Ross Hill Road in Lisbon.



11: Late Georgian house on Ross Hill Road, Lisbon.



Roof forms vary from the common gable roof, with the ridge running parallel with the street, to the use of the gambrel roof - of which the County Courthouse in New London, built in 1784, is one of the best examples in the entire country - to minor variations such as the jerkin head roof. It was also in this period that the balustraded hip roof which was to gain so much favor in the Federal period emerged. An example of the hip roof Georgian is located in the Village of North Stonington.



12: Georgian style New London County Courthouse, built in 1784, New London.



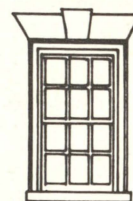
13: Hip-roofed Georgian house, North Stonington Village.

## THE FEDERAL STYLE

More properly called the Post Colonial period, the Federal style of building began immediately after the Revolution and continued until the 1820's when it was abruptly replaced by the enormously popular Greek Revival.

The Federal style was still in the Georgian tradition, and in many cases it is difficult to tell the difference between late Georgian and Federal, the only apparent differences being in detail. The detail, while still classical, becomes more refined and lighter in feeling, and the doorway remains as the key distinguishing feature. The entranceway exhibited a great variety of treatment, including the Palladian or Venetian window, but was marked by the introduction of the elliptical fanlight, which was extended to enclose the flanking sidelights and was supported by lighter yet more decorative adaptations of the Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and composite pilasters and columns. One-story porticos and porches were now used with more frequency. After 1810 two-story porches with full length columns also appeared, and the plan was sometimes modified to include projecting, curvilinear bays. The plan, while often continuing as the center hall plan, now begins to reflect a more functional arrangement of space, using curved interior walls, alcoves and elliptical rooms to create a more interesting interior.

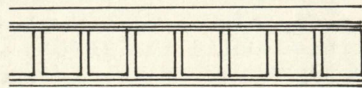
The detail of the windows is another distinguishing feature of the Federal style. Previously the upper floor windows were framed directly into the cornice, but in this period, a clear break between window head and cornice is evident. This space widened with time, and the heads were often made to resemble stone by the inclusion of a key stone or corner blocks in a flat lintel, as shown below. The cornice and other trim were



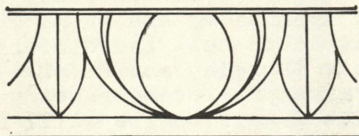
of extremely delicate form, and the use of dentils, egg and dart and pearl mouldings, garlands, reeding and the carved or cast frieze, consisting of sunbursts,



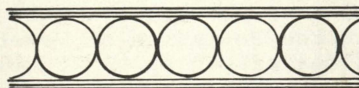
groups of figures or rope garlands now emerged in full array.



DENTILS



EGG AND DART



PEARL

A common roof form of the Federal period is the hip roof with a flat deck, often balustraded. Dormer windows were almost always used during this period. An example of the Federal style with a parapet and walkway on the roof is a house on North Main Street in Stonington.



14: Federal house on North Main Street, Stonington.

## THE GREEK REVIVAL STYLE,

C. 1820 - C. 1850

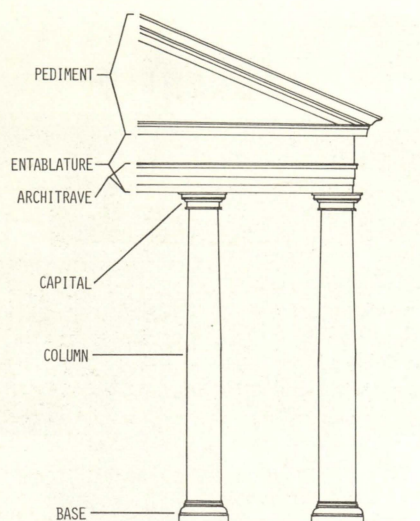
Prompted by a desire to identify with the ideals of classic Greece and the Greek War for Independence, and bolstered by a new knowledge of Greek antiquities, the builders of the early 19th century were to dramatically change their architectural style almost overnight. Although there were few trained architects at this time, especially those willing to work on less than the great public buildings being constructed, the first "pattern books" and builder's guides were now readily available. Armed with complete plans, elevations and construction details, the relatively untrained builders of the period were to create many fine examples of this new, ultra-refined style.

Many of the early Greek Revival buildings in the region exhibit a mixture of Federal and Post Colonial elements. The transition from these earlier styles to the Greek first appeared as embellishments to what still remain as basically Colonial building forms. The typical deep, simple cornices, flat or paneled corner pilasters, pedimented doorways and window caps were applied as mere architectural detailing to the familiar central hall and center chimney plan houses of the late 18th century.

In contrast to the delicate, ornate detailing of the Federal period, Greek Revival detail was usually massive and bold, and marked by a plainness that lent an air of determination and permanence to even the simplest farmhouses of the region. Often called an age of "white architecture," this style was particularly effective in public buildings and in the larger homes of the wealthy merchants of the coastal towns. But as can be seen scattered throughout the towns, villages and rural areas of the region, the Greek Revival style was quickly adapted and modified to fit local needs. Where the classic Greek temple form, with an entablature supported by massive two-story Doric, Ionic or Corinthian columns could not be used, a simple portico or pediment with flat corner pilasters would suffice.

By the 1820's the Greek Revival style had evolved as the new building vernacular, and rapidly replaced the typical one or one and one-half story cottages that dotted the region. A typical dwelling of this period would be of wood construction, have the gable end facing the road and be marked by a deep cornice extending the full length of the house.

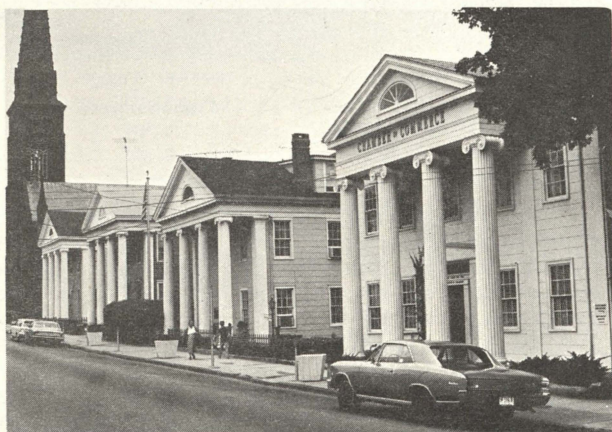




15: Components of a Greek Revival portico.

The doorway, flanked by paneled pilasters and topped by a flat, narrow window would be placed in one end. The eaves cornice would be carried across the gable end to form a pediment, with paneled or possibly fluted pilasters at the corners. In many instances, the architrave under the eaves would have frieze or "eyebrow" windows punched into it, and as much as any single feature, this type of window treatment identifies even the simplest Greek Revival house.

The most impressive houses of this period are the classic temples. The Coit Houses, commonly referred to as "Whale Oil Row" in New London are excellent examples of the more elaborate Greek Revival that flourished in the 1830's and 1840's. This row of four houses, now restored, stands as one of the region's most important groups of historic buildings.



16: Greek Revival buildings, Whale Oil Row, New London.

Gravel Street in West Mystic has several Greek inspired houses, showing the wide range of detail possible in this period. Two of the most important examples of Greek Revival in the region are the four-columned house on North Main Street in Stonington and the monumental temple, hexastyle (six column) house in Colchester now restored and used as a funeral home.



17: Greek Revival hexastyle building, 19 South Main Street, Colchester.

While the lack of freedom in planning was accepted as a condition in using the Greek Revival style, an expanding notion of the "picturesque" eventually led to the decline of this simple, refined building style. Many owners of essentially Greek houses were attracted to the freedom of design afforded by the so-called Romantic styles now in vogue. Classic columns were replaced by thin delicate posts and the familiar carved or pierced woodwork now known as "gingerbread" was added wherever desired, offering a visual display of the changing tastes as the 19th century passed its mid-point.

## ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN STYLES, C. 1840 - C. 1900

Greek Revival detail gave way to the detail of the newer "Romantic" styles with more finality and abruptness than Federal and Post Colonial detail gave way to the Greek, and the change is easily recognized in Southeastern Connecticut. Until only recently the styles of the mid- and late 19th century were looked on with disfavor and dismissed as the "dark age of American ar-



chitecture," but there has been a growing appreciation for these expressive and highly personal styles, and the many buildings that remain are living testimony to the vigor and variety of the period.

Concurrent with the height of the Greek Revival in the 1830's and 1840's, the Romantic Revival, then popular in England, began to find followers here in America. Gothic Revival in its true form was a stone architecture, but like the Greek, Gothic details were easily transferred to wood, leading to an infinite variety of decorative forms. The fascination with the Gothic detail, best suited to churches, was to spread to even the rural areas, and many small churches were built in a basically Greek temple form, but with pointed windows and other "Gothik" trim. A fine example of this exists in the small church on the Salem Green, now used as the Town Hall.



18: Greek Temple form building with Gothic windows, Town Hall, Salem.

Residential buildings of this period are represented in the region by a number of the so-called "Bracketed Italian" style houses. This type of house had numerous variations, but the most prominent feature is the freedom of planning which allowed for the inclusion of bays, gables, cupolas and deep porches, with a variety of roof forms, running from the nearly flat to the absurdly steep. The most distinctive feature of the Italianate house was, however, the decorative brackets which were placed in the wide overhanging eaves. These brackets, now mass produced by new millwork machines, appear on many houses in the region. The more elaborate houses, such as Merry Hall on Shore Road in Stonington, were topped by a cupola. Other examples of



19: Italianate style Merry Hall, Shore Road, Stonington.

this style are the house on Route 2, just east of the Colchester Green, and one on North Main Street, just north of the Village of Stonington. The more impressive form of Italianate, known as "Tuscan Villa," complete with tower and picturesque massing, appears with less frequency, but an example of this variation can be found on Washington Street in Norwich.



20: Tuscan Villa house at 154 Washington Street, Norwich.

The "Carpenter Gothic" style is more common in this area and is characterized by steeply pitched roofs, pointed windows and often, in an attempt to heighten the vertical effect, board and batten siding. One of the finest examples of this style is the small Gilead Church on the north frontage road of Interstate Route 95 in the Town of Waterford. The Railroad Station in Colchester, renovated for a commercial use, is another example of "board and batten," while a house on West Mystic



Avenue in West Mystic is a good example of "Carpenter Gothic" as applied to a residential building.



21: Carpenter Gothic style Gilead Church on the north frontage road of Interstate Route 95, Waterford.



22: Carpenter Gothic style house on West Mystic Avenue, West Mystic.

Almost always, the pointed gable ends of the "Carpenter Gothic" houses include highly decorative, carved scrollwork, called "bargeboards." This detail is often of considerable visual interest and is unmistakably characteristic of this period. A house in Norwich shows this detail taken to its most elaborate extreme. (Photo 23)

The "Romantic" styles of the middle of the 19th century were replaced by the more exuberant and eclectic "Victorian" as building activity began again after the Civil War. In this category fall structures ranging from the sober brick and stone mansions and public buildings



23: "Bargeboard" trim on house at 248 Broad Street, Norwich.

of "Romanesque" proportions to the fanciful agglomerations we now call "Charles Addams" after the cartoonist of the NEW YORKER magazine. As in the "Romantic Revival," many variations of Victorian buildings are present in the region, including the French Second Empire, or "Mansard" style, the "Romanesque Revival," the Victorian Gothic and an eclectic "folk" style often referred to as "American Craftsman."

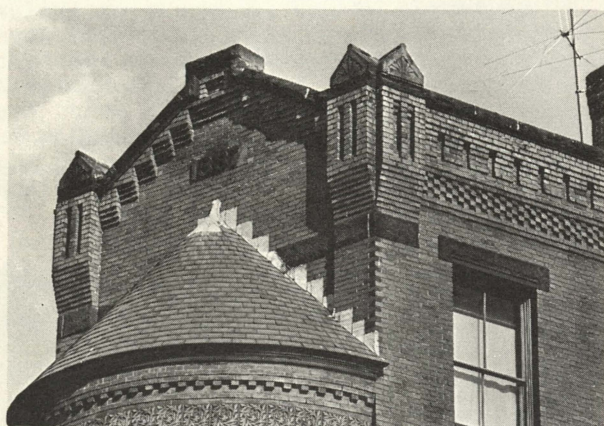
The "French Second Empire" is characterized by the "mansard" roof, which often was punctuated by a variety of dormer window forms and capped with a cast iron parapet or walkway. The more common Second Empire style in this region is exemplified by the brick or wooden residences with their liberal use of carpenter details, especially spindle posts, balusters and eaves brackets. The house shown in Photo 24 is an example of this type.



24: Second Empire style house at 257 Broadway, Norwich.

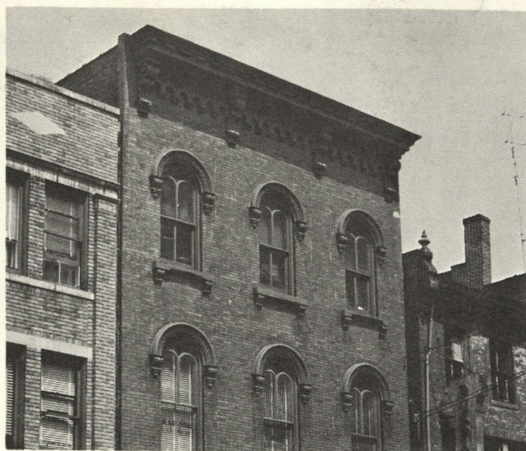


The "Romanesque Revival" can be seen in two distinct forms in the Southeastern Connecticut Region. First is the somewhat utilitarian brick style used for many of the commercial buildings in such cities as Norwich and New London. Many of these structures were built before the Civil War, but the use of brick in a sculptural sense, and Renaissance detailing, is typical of this period. The simplest of these buildings has a "corbel table" of bricks which create the cornice, and may be used with pilasters that are slightly raised from the main surface of the building. The win-



25: Corbel table on commercial building on Washington Square, Norwich.

dows may be embellished with decorative caps, the cornice may be further defined by the use of brick or metal brackets, as shown below, and may make use of a number of other purely decorative details such as quoins or prefabricated cast iron facades on the ground floor.



26: Romanesque Revival commercial building on Main Street, Norwich.

The more impressive form of "Romanesque Revival" that appears in the region is sometimes referred to as the "Richardsonian Romanesque." H.H. Richardson's style was widely imitated during the 1870's and 1880's, and the Slater Library in Jewett City, the Bill Memorial Library in Groton, and the Slater Memorial Museum in Norwich are cases in point. But the region does have two examples of this most important American architect's work in the Railroad Station and the Public Library in New London.



27: Union Station, New London, H.H. Richardson, architect.



28: Public Library of New London, H.H. Richardson, architect.

Unfortunately, the Railroad Station, called by the noted American architectural historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock as one of Richardson's "last great opportunities" and "the best of its type



he had built,"\* is now scheduled for demolition by the New London Redevelopment Agency.

The "Victorian Gothic" style, characterized by pointed arches, steeply pitched roofs with correspondingly peaked gables, an attempt to make the typical wood siding appear as stone, and the use of contrasting colors in the trim, is the style referred to as "Charles Addams." The Charles A. Converse House in Norwich, built in c. 1870, is an illustration of this form.



29: Victorian Gothic style Charles A. Converse house at 185 Washington Street, Norwich.

One of the most overlooked styles of the Victorian period is the highly decorative "American Craftsman," with its sub-styles such as the "shingle style" that is so prevalent in the coastal summer residence areas of the region. Shingle style might be thought of as adaptation of the masonry "Richardsonian" style to the more workable and less costly wood frame construction. The Griswold Hotel in Groton shows the American Craftsman style in its largest form, but many of the late 19th century residences in the immediate vicinity are better examples of this imaginative and decorative style. The Library at Ledyard Center is another example of the "Romanesque" style adapted to wood construction.

In the American Craftsman style, the emphasis is on the freedom of planning and massing, with liberal use of such appendages as porches, bays and exaggerated roof forms. Gable ends, the exterior walls themselves and porches are

targets for the use of elaborately carved, sawn, and turned wood details. The siding, if shingles, is often arranged in an infinite variety of patterns the "barnboards," a holdover from the "Carpenter Gothic" period, are screen-like in effect, and the eaves and posts of the verandahs are very ornate. One of the best examples anywhere of the type of decorative woodworking of this period is the Deacon Palmer House in Noank, which has a wooden screen depicting a good portion of Aesop's Fables enclosing the impressive porch. A charming disregard



30: American Craftsman style Deacon Palmer House, Noank.



31: Trim on porch of Deacon Palmer House, Noank.

for convention is exhibited in these houses, which are among the more significant architectural works of the last two decades of the 19th century.

\* Hitchcock, Henry-Russell. The Architecture of H.H. Richardson and His Times. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, Rev. Ed. 1961, p. 273.



## CHURCHES AND OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS

No examination of the architecture that exists in the Southeastern Connecticut Region would be complete without mention of the many fine churches that were constructed throughout the 18th and 19th centuries.

As stated in Connecticut, a Guide to its Roads, Lore, and People:\* "The first church edifices were seldom more than large houses in appearance" and the meeting house of the Long Society Congregational Church in Preston, the earliest church now standing in the State, confirms this thought. Begun in 1726, the church was extensively renovated in 1819 and was the subject of an exceptional renovation project completed by the Long Society a few years ago.



32: Long Society Congregational Church, Preston.

At the turn of the 19th century, the classical influence was in full swing, and the tower, which previously occurred only on the State, or Congregational Church, now became an important design element. The First Congregational Church of Norwichtown, built in 1801 as the fifth meeting house in Norwich, shows the tower centered in the front facade. The projecting portico repeats the dentils and other details of the pediment of the main building, and repeats the use of wood corner quoins.

The Connecticut Guide also suggests that "The golden age of church archi-

tecture here [the state] came not in the strictly 'Colonial' period, but in the years from 1810 to 1825."\*\* Influenced by the work of James Gibb and Sir Christopher Wren in England, the tower now began to take octagonal as well as the more familiar square form and in many instances was "given a degree of embellishment never before seen in New England."\*\*\* The church in Voluntown, while of a slightly later date (1838), with its "Gibb's" tower and classical front facade, the church on Pendleton Hill in North Stonington and the Congregational Church in the Village of Stonington are good examples of this style of church building.

Church architecture changed along the same lines as did residential building of the same periods, and a number of distinctive churches of later periods are to be found in the region. Churches in Newent, Franklin, Ledyard Center, and North Stonington Village are good, although varied, examples of the Colonial and Greek Revival forms as applied to church buildings. The Gothic Revival is represented by the stone Congregational Church on State Street in New London, and even examples of the Romanesque Revival and Victorian periods can be found, such as the Park Congregational Church in Norwich, and the previously mentioned Gilead Church in Waterford.

In addition to churches, a number of other interesting building types exist in the region. The textile mills, such as those in Jewett City, Taftville, and Baltic, complete with good mill housing,



33: Ponemah Mill, Taftville.

\* Federal Writer's Project. Connecticut. New York, 1938, p. 89.

\*\* Ibid., p. 90.

\*\*\* Ibid., p. 90.





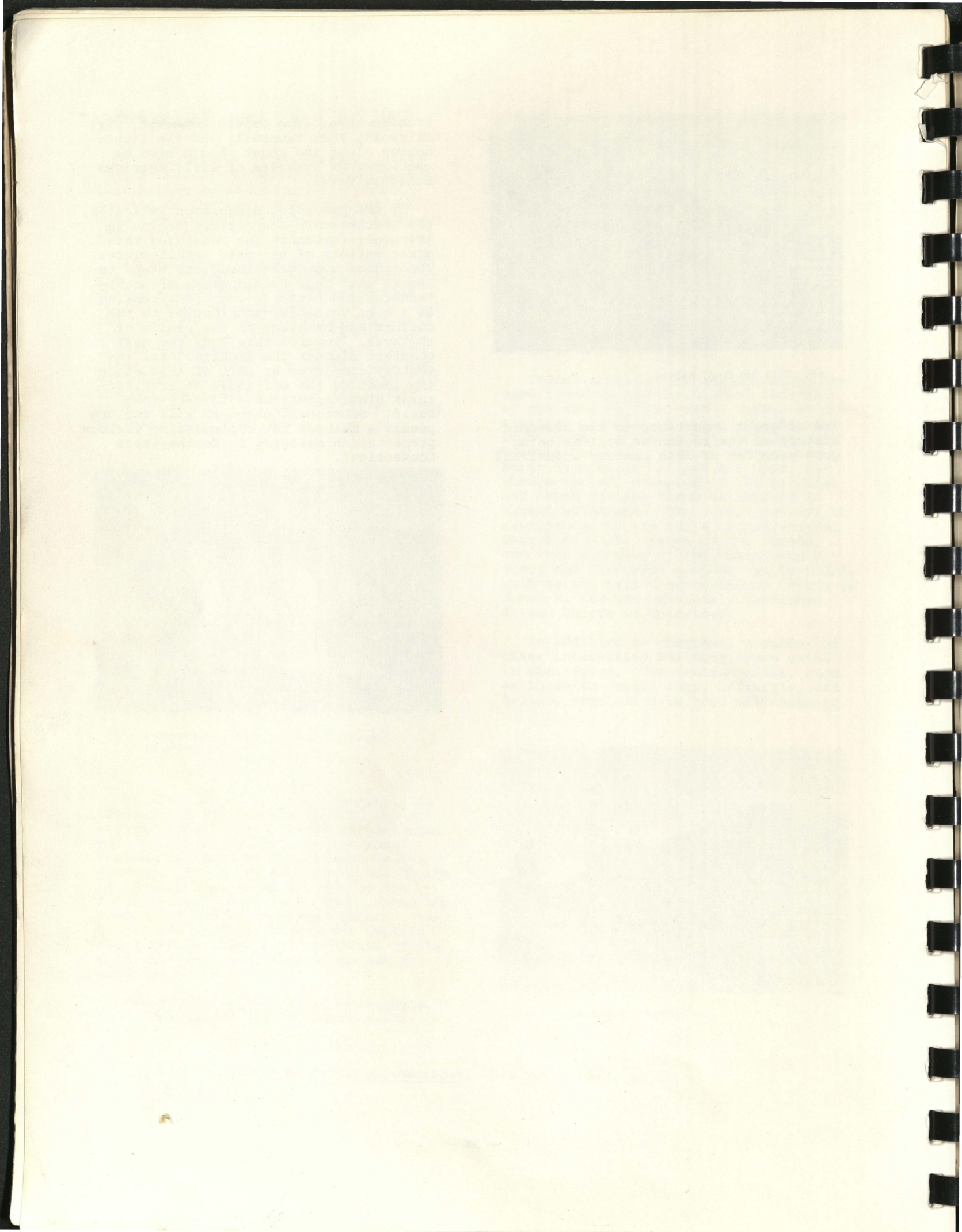
34: Mill housing, Baltic.

are of great importance to the economic history of the region as well as being good examples of 19th century industrial

architecture. The Groton Monument, Fort Griswold, Fort Trumbull, and the light-houses along the coast should also be mentioned as examples of early American building forms.

As the preceding discussion indicates, the Southeastern Connecticut Region is extremely fortunate for retaining this great variety of historic architecture. The region must take immediate steps to insure that this kaleidoscope of architectural and historic resources remains as a most valuable contribution to the culture and heritage of the people of the area. Towards this end, the next chapters discuss the architectural inventory completed as part of this study and identify the buildings of architectural significance on a town-by-town basis. Subsequent chapters will explore possible methods for implementing various preservation measures in Southeastern Connecticut.

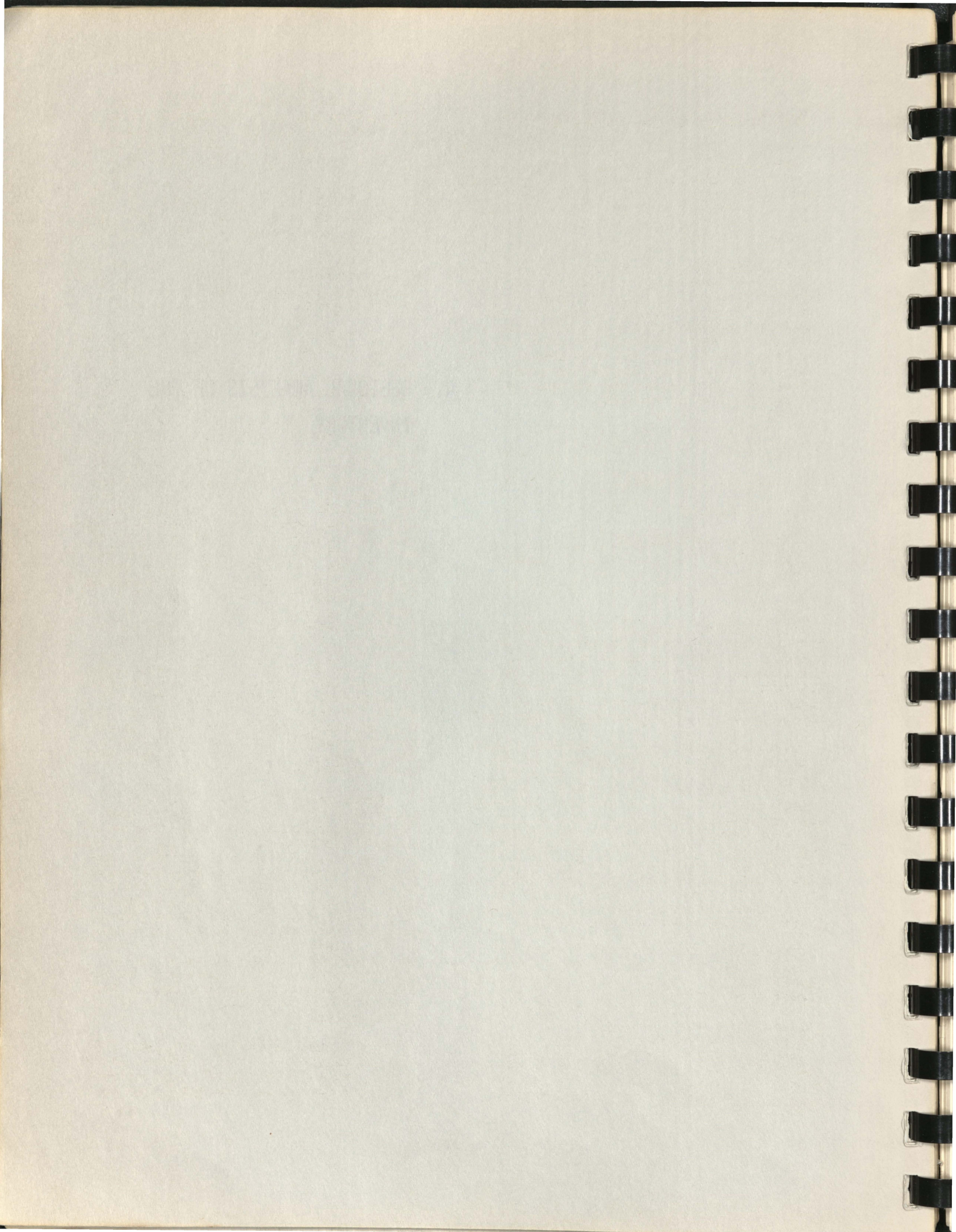






#### 4. REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE INVENTORY







## DISTRIBUTION OF SITES AND STRUCTURES

The amount, distribution, and condition of historically and architecturally important sites and structures have contributed greatly to the individual character and attractiveness of the 18-town Southeastern Connecticut Region.

The survey made in connection with this study identified 1,265 historic sites and architecturally significant clusters of buildings and individual structures that should be considered for preservation measures. These features are shown on the map in the rear cover of this report. The individual structures mapped as good examples of a particular period total 1,160 and are classed as follows:

Colonial	516
Georgian and Federal	94
Greek Revival	243
Romantic Revival and Victorian	<u>307</u>
Total:	1,160

In addition, there are 105 clusters of buildings and other historically important features scattered throughout the region. The most important of these clusters is Stonington Village which has almost 400 structures, most of which are historically or architecturally important.

The distribution of the various styles indicates where economic growth and development occurred during the several periods of the region's history. By the latter part of the 17th century, settlers were rapidly establishing farms in the outlying sections away from the original settlements of Stonington, New London, and Norwich. The widely scattered Colonial homes existing today bear witness to the great amount of agricultural activity that was prevalent in the region in those early years of our history.

Increased trade, a greater sense of security, and a stronger economy are reflected in the Georgian and later Federal styles, most of which were to be found in the more densely populated sections of the region to which the merchant and professional classes were attracted. Foreign and coastal trade flourished during the 19th century, when numerous Greek Revival homes were built in the trade centers of New London, Stonington, Noank,

Mystic, and Norwich. Greek Revival architecture is found in Colchester as well, bearing witness to that community's prosperity as a small industrial and commercial center during that period.

Concentrations of both the Greek Revival and the Victorian styles are to be found in the vicinity of the region's important textile mills that flourished during the latter 19th and early 20th centuries. The Victorian style also became a common sight in the coastal towns, reflecting the continued affluence of those connected with the sea trade.

The region contains several important concentrations of historically and architecturally significant buildings. Three of these are outstanding for the quality, variety, and quantity of buildings they contain. First, Mystic Seaport on the Mystic River in Stonington is a recreated 19th century coastal village, complete with homes, shops and wharfs lined with majestic sailing ships. Most of the buildings and ships were moved to the Seaport from locations throughout New England. Other Seaport buildings display ship models, figureheads, paintings, and other items from the days of sail. A feature attraction at the Seaport is the "Charles W. Morgan," the last survivor of the nation's vast fleet of sail-powered whaling ships. The "Morgan" is the only Registered National Historic Landmark in Southeastern Connecticut. The Seaport is owned and operated by the Marine Historical Association, a non-profit educational and research institution. The Association is supported by membership dues, gifts, admission fees, and the sale of merchandise in stores located on the property. The most popular tourist attraction in Connecticut, the Seaport attracted more than 400,000 visitors in 1967.

Second, the Norwichtown Historic District is a rich grouping of 17th and 18th century homes, including the well-restored Leffingwell Inn, which attracted more than 2,100 visitors in 1967. The Historic District, voted into existence in 1967 by the property owners and the Norwich City Council, assures a degree of preservation that heretofore depended entirely upon the continued good taste of the property-owners within the area. In the future, at least the exterior appearance of the buildings will be controlled and maintained in a manner harmonious with the historic character of the District.

Third, that part of the Village of Stonington located on a peninsula south of the New Haven Railroad right-of-way is a self-contained community that saw



its major growth during the 18th and 19th centuries and has survived largely intact until now. Virtually every street in the Village is a scene from the past, and land uses include industrial and commercial activities as well as residential and public structures. Unlike Mystic Seaport and Norwich, there are no legal or other measures presently being utilized to protect the charm and character of the Village. Land use controls do not exist, and only the appreciation for the past on the part of many of the present landowners has continued to preserve this important historical community.

In addition to the above three major concentrations of historic buildings, several groupings of smaller proportions or of a specialized nature exist in the region. These are described briefly as follows, beginning with the coastal towns:

1. Pawcatuck has a good lineal concentration of Victorian structures along West Broad and Moss Streets.
2. Both the Stonington and Groton sections of Mystic contain important concentrations of Greek Revival homes, and Gravel Street in West Mystic is almost solidly lined with a very scenic mixture of homes dating back to Colonial times.
3. A concentrated grouping of Colonial, Greek Revival, and Victorian buildings make Old Mystic, at the head of the Mystic River, a valuable part of the region's heritage.
4. Noank has a charm of its own, strongly influenced by the good variety of Greek Revival and Victorian homes scattered throughout this compact, peninsular Village.
5. The Shingle Style and American Craftsman homes of the Victorian period give the Eastern Point area of Groton a special character. This area is clustered around the Griswold Hotel, a famous local landmark.
6. New London contains a large number of architecturally important buildings from all periods sprinkled primarily on the fringes of the central business district.
7. Old Black Point, at the southerly tip of East Lyme, has a special character and elegance influenced by several stately Colonial and Victorian structures scattered among the large, well-kept seasonal dwellings.
8. The small Village of North Stonington has an excellent variety of structures, dating from the Colonial through to the Victorian periods.

9. Preston City offers an impressive cluster of Colonial and Federal homes dominated by a Greek Revival church.
10. In addition to the Norwichtown Historic District, the City of Norwich contains several separate clusters of architecturally significant buildings from different periods located throughout the municipality.
11. Fitchville, with its stone mill buildings and town hall and well-preserved mill housing, is an important cluster in Bozrah.
12. Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival, and Victorian styles are all represented in an area of Colchester centering on the Town Green.
13. Baltic is a well-preserved mill town, complete with textile mill building, warehouses, workers' housing, a grist mill, and a railroad station, in the Town of Sprague.
14. Also in Sprague, the area known as Hanover contains a small mixed cluster centering on a green.

Those buildings not included in the groups enumerated above are for the most part scattered throughout the region, with some towns being more blessed with them than others. However, each and every town in Southeastern Connecticut has at least a score of buildings that appear to be historically or architecturally important enough to warrant consideration for some form of preservation action.

Many of the buildings and sites included in this inventory are widely known throughout New England and some of them are nationally known. However, every item in the inventory should be considered important and worthy of some form of preservation.

Those structures and sites that have special local, regional, statewide, or national historical meaning will be noted in the municipal discussions in the next chapter of this report.

## MARINE HERITAGE AREA

A feature that is felt to be unique to Southeastern Connecticut is the proposed Marine Heritage Area. This Area was first referred to by Joseph Hickey, former planner with the Connecticut Development Commission, in The Appearance of Connecticut, published by the Development Commission in 1963. The Area was more precisely defined and discussed



in Open Space and Recreation, a 1964 publication of SCRPA.

The proposed Marine Heritage Area contains a unique collection of sites, buildings, museums, relics, and operating installations associated with the maritime development of this nation from Colonial times to the present day. New London contains many traces of its former position as a leading whaling port; it has an imposing lighthouse constructed in 1801, an active waterfront, and it contains the nation's Coast Guard Academy. Groton has a variety of attractions: Fort Griswold, the submarine museum and library, Electric Boat - birthplace of the atomic submarine, boat tours past the Submarine Base, the Submarine Base itself, and Noank, with the University of Connecticut's marine laboratory. Stonington has Mystic Seaport, Stonington Village, the first federally-constructed lighthouse in the nation, and Connecticut's only remaining commercial fishing fleet. In addition, the proposed Marine Heritage Area contains most of the region's marinas and yacht clubs and is traversed by New England's Heritage Trail. It is doubtful whether any other area in the nation so well displays the variety and time span of our marine heritage as does this section of Connecticut.

In order to take advantage of the cultural and tourist potentials of this area it is necessary to officially define its boundaries, mark its feature attractions, and map a route for visitors to follow. Next, steps should be taken to preserve and enhance the historic buildings and sites contained in the area. Finally, a campaign must be launched to acquaint visitors with the importance of the area and encourage them to visit its many interesting features.

The best approach toward establishing a Marine Heritage Area would be through a joint effort of the three towns involved. The vehicle for such cooperation presently exists in the form of the Heritage Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of Southeastern Connecticut. The implementation and promotion of this idea would certainly be a project ultimately benefitting all of the region.

## OTHER SURVEYS

Previous surveys have been conducted by both the state and federal governments that include many of the items in this inventory. The most recent survey in this region was conducted by the State Historical Commission as a part of its

present inventory of historic structures and landmarks throughout the state. The intent of the state survey is to identify those features that will become part of a statewide historic preservation plan. The plan will serve as a basis for administering both state and federal historic preservation grant programs. The state inventory is evaluated by a team of historical and architectural experts who classify the structures according to their national, state, or local importance. Hopefully this procedure will eventually enable the Historical Commission to make more objective decisions regarding the eligibility of preservation projects to receive state or federal grants.

The Historic American Buildings Survey Inventory is a national inventory sponsored jointly by the National Park Service, the Library of Congress, the American Institute of Architects, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Survey is intended as a source of reference for the preservation, restoration, and recording of historical structures throughout the country. A detailed form for each structure lists considerable structural and historical data about the building and thus provides a basis for selecting buildings about which further information may be desirable. Many of the buildings recorded by the Inventory have been drawn in measured detail or photographed in order to facilitate possible future restoration efforts. Almost forty structures in Southeastern Connecticut have already been included in this Inventory.

Earlier descriptions of the region, including the listings of many historic sites and structures, are contained in state and federal guide books. The Connecticut Guide, a project of the State Planning Board, was published in 1935 to aid those traveling through Connecticut during the state's Tercentenary celebrations. A similar, though somewhat larger, guide, Connecticut, A Guide To Its Roads, Lore, and People, was written by members of the Federal Writer's Project of the Works Project Administration for the state in 1938. Both of these publications provide a reference for local historical research as do the many local histories produced over the years by residents of the region.

## THREATS TO PRESERVATION

In 1934 Mrs. Eva Butler of Ledyard made an inventory of the homes in Groton that were built prior to 1800 and that



still existed at that time. A total of 95 homes were identified and mapped. In 1968, just 34 years later, one-third of these have disappeared altogether, and a number of those remaining are hardly recognizable as 18th century structures. Such is the case in many other towns in Southeastern Connecticut.

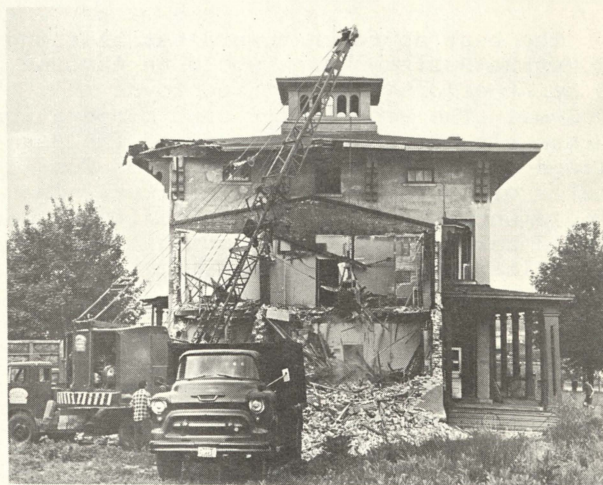
What causes this rapid disappearance of these relics from the past? The following are some of the causes:

1. Fire. A large percentage of old buildings have undoubtedly fallen victim to the flames. Large, open fireplaces, dry wood, and crumbling chimney stacks are not the safest combinations in the world.
2. Demolition by neglect. A building must be maintained if it is to survive. This is especially true for those structures that have withstood use and abuse for more than 150 years. Once abandoned, an old house deteriorates rapidly.
3. Poor alterations. Without preservation controls, the style of a historic house can be easily destroyed by a tasteless owner. Dormers, bay windows, asbestos siding, large porches and other structural additions are all features that can seriously harm the character of an old house if improperly and thoughtlessly used. Furthermore, an old building that has been altered to the extent that it can no longer be identified with a particular period or style is not likely to generate the interest and action needed to preserve it.
4. Changes in use. The way a structure is used on the inside frequently is reflected in its outward appearance. Converting a Colonial house to a grocery store, for example, is usually accompanied by enlarging the windows and extending a multi-colored sign out from the front of the building. However, such transitions can be effected without destroying the integrity of the style. A good example of this is the conversion of the old train station in Colchester to a commercial establishment.
5. Urban renewal. In the past the procedure in renewal project areas has been to wipe out the old and replace it with the new. Many fine old buildings have been accordingly destroyed in New London and others are likely to meet this fate in other parts of the region. Virtually every historic structure in the core area of a city is in danger of being demolished to make

way for an industry or business producing a higher economic return to the municipality or the property owner. A notable exception to this was the preservation of Whale Oil Row in the New London redevelopment project area. These buildings were spared from demolition and will continue to enhance the city's center.

6. Highway construction. Over the years some of the region's finest homes have been destroyed in favor of "good highway design." However, in recent years the Connecticut Highway Department has aided historic preservation by identifying historic structures in the paths of new highways and then seeking out preservation minded individuals or groups to remove them for preservation. In some instances outstanding historical structures have been moved by the Highway Department and given to local groups for preservation.
7. Incompatible zoning. A historic structure is only as valuable as its setting and surroundings. An old dwelling in a commercial or industrial zone is not likely to be maintained very well by its owner, especially if obnoxious non-residential uses move onto adjoining properties. Appropriate zoning can be an incentive for keeping an old building in good repair.

All of these threats exist in Southeastern Connecticut today, but steps can be taken to minimize and even eliminate some of them. An informed and concerned citizenry can reverse, or at least slow down, this destructive trend.



35: B.P. Learned House, New London. Demolished June, 1968. (Photo by The Day.)



5. LOCAL ANALYSIS OF THE  
INVENTORY







## INTRODUCTION

The inventory presented in connection with this report is primarily intended to give a regional view of the magnitude of our historic preservation potential. However, the achievement of any progress toward preservation depends upon the initiative of interested individuals and groups at the local level. In this chapter we will discuss the inventory on a town-by-town basis, describe the local preservation activities that are presently under way, and make suggestions for additional efforts at the municipal level. The towns will be discussed in alphabetical order, and maps of all towns are found at the end of this chapter.

### BOZRAH

Generally, the distribution of historic buildings in Bozrah consists of a sprinkling of a dozen Colonial and six Greek Revival buildings throughout the town, and a good mill village in Fitchville. Gilman contains a small grouping of architecturally interesting buildings, including Colonial houses, stone houses, and two mill buildings. Fitchville's old mill building today houses chickens, but the structure still dominates and lends character to the village. Other stone structures nearby, together with a modest cluster of mill-workers' houses, a 19th century church, and an adjacent pond, form a village that has retained all of the basic ingredients that were there years ago when Fitchville was the center of industry in the town.

Individually outstanding structures in Bozrah include the Italian Villa house just east of Gilman, opposite two imposing 19th century barns, and a fine Colonial home of the center chimney plan located on the west side of Blue Hill Road near the Franklin town line.

The Fitchville area, with some modest effort, could once again become a pleasant-looking settlement. Thinning out of trees and underbrush around some buildings, planting around others, and some minor improvements to a few of the structures could do much to enhance the area.

The only significant public preservation effort in the town appears to be centered on the town hall, and that has probably occurred more from convenience than by design. This fine stone structure is a good example of a historic building being used for a productive

self-sustaining purpose.

At present Bozrah does not have a historical society. Perhaps this is needed to generate the necessary awareness and pride that preservation programs depend upon.

### COLCHESTER

More than fifty buildings in Colchester have been identified as being historically or architecturally important. Sixteen Colonials are scattered throughout the town, and twenty-one Greek Revival buildings are to be found, with a heavy concentration in the Borough. In addition to the Greek Revival, the Borough also contains a number of Colonial, Federal, and Victorian buildings either facing on or within a short distance of the Town Green.

Several structures in Colchester are outstanding examples of their style. The early Colonial on Buckley Hill Road just west of the Borough is an excellent restoration. A good example of the Georgian style can be found on the west side of Route 149 in North Westchester. The six-column portico on the Greek Revival building just south of the Town Green is rare in this area. And there is an excellent Victorian home on the north side of Route 2, just east of the Green.

Until recently, the Town Green and the properties facing it had a neglected and run-down appearance. Through the efforts of concerned local residents, a clean-up campaign has improved the appearance of the Green, but much could be done to brighten the view from the Green itself.

The area around the Green and along Route 85 to the south contains a good collection of buildings, favorably suited for the establishment of a historic district. This should be given serious consideration as a means of preserving the most impressive historic feature in Colchester. Preservation of a sort is being achieved through the continued use of the old Bacon Academy building and the Victorian town hall in the Borough. Both of these buildings would be valuable assets to a historic district.

The Colchester Historical Society, including about 75 members, meets quarterly and offers programs of historical interest at each meeting. Other than that, the Society does not actively engage in preservation activities.



## EAST LYME

Although 29 good Colonial structures were identified in East Lyme, their wide distribution over the town does not seem to favor a historic district approach to preservation. They nevertheless are important features of the town and should be protected for the future by some other means, as discussed in the following chapter.

East Lyme also has several good examples of Greek Revival and Victorian structures, a small group of which is found along the Post Road in Flanders. In addition, an important area of large, well-designed, seasonal homes at Old Black Point should be protected and preserved. This is presently accomplished by the combination of wealth, pride, and a home-owners association, but may require more public action in the future.

Probably the most famous building in East Lyme is the Thomas Lee House on the south side of Route 156, just east of Rocky Neck State Park. Originally built as a one-room house in about 1660, this house is regarded as the oldest surviving frame structure in Connecticut, and is described in Chapter 3. It was restored for, and is maintained by, the East Lyme Historical Society, which provides quarters for a caretaker in the adjacent "Little Boston Schoolhouse." About 2,250 visitors paid the 50-cent charge to see the Lee House in 1967, and numerous free school tours were conducted through the building. Funds to maintain the house are derived from the admission charge and donations to the Society.

Other items of local interest in the town include a cluster of early house foundations west of Scott Road in the northern part of the town and an Indian well and burial ground at McCook Point. The gambrel-roofed Calkins Tavern at the intersection of Routes 51 and 161 was built about 1700 and hosted such notables as George Washington and Lafayette.

A 19th century brick mill building, located at the southerly end of Gorton Pond and most recently used for the manufacturing of steam gauge parts, was offered to the East Lyme Historical Society on condition that it be properly maintained and used for educational purposes. Insufficient interest on the part of local residents and a financial inability on the part of the Society to sponsor such a project has resulted in the probability that the building will be demolished by the state.

The East Lyme Historical Society has about 70 members and meets semi-annually, at which times special programs are presented. However, the meetings are primarily social events, and the routine business of the organization is conducted by an executive committee that meets whenever necessary during the year.

## FRANKLIN

Although there are no concentrations of historically or architecturally important buildings and sites in Franklin, there are at least thirty-two structures of significance that are spotted at random throughout the municipality. Half of these are of the Colonial, Georgian, and Federal periods, with the remainder divided equally among the more recent periods. Among the more interesting items noted in the Franklin inventory are three one-room schools, an old cider mill, mill foundations along the Susque-tonscut Brook at Meeting House Hill Road, and an old toll house on the west side of Route 32 just south of Smith Corner. (The old schoolhouse off Route 87 is owned by the town, but the land on which it stands is privately-owned and as such is a possible threat to the school's future existence.)

Perhaps the most outstanding historical feature in Franklin is the old Bailey House and the surrounding property off Route 207, just east of Ayer's Gap. Built in 1790, this well-kept Colonial cottage probably appears much the same today as it did almost 2 centuries ago. Set across the road from the spectacular Bailey's Ravine, the house is a particularly important historic and scenic asset to the town and every effort should be made to insure its preservation.

Franklin has had a historical society for seven years and boasts a membership of about 70 persons. Meetings are held monthly. The Society's main activity concerns the preservation of the previously-mentioned school, but it has also marked historic features in the town, and members occasionally organize walks through old cemeteries and to other points of local importance.

## GRISWOLD

Forty-nine old and unusual structures were recorded in Griswold. These included excellent buildings from Colonial through Victorian styles, as well as a



good mill and mill housing in Jewett City. Colonial houses predominate, with twenty-four scattered throughout the town. There are minor clusters, involving three or four buildings, in Pachaug and on South Main Street in Jewett City. The latter group includes a very good Victorian house with a mansard roof. Another very important house in Jewett City is the large Federal house on the south side of Ashland Street, just east of Main Street.

Griswold does not have a historical society at the present time, with the result that all preservation activities are by individual property owners. Much could be gained by organizing a society of such interested owners. The many fine homes in Griswold are too valuable to the town to depend entirely for their preservation on the interests, knowledge, and capabilities of successive individual property owners.

## GROTON

A total of 174 sites and structures were identified in Groton, with the Greek Revival predominating. There are also large numbers of Colonial and Victorian styled buildings. Old Mystic and West Mystic both have outstanding concentrations of all of the above-mentioned styles, while Noank is predominantly Greek Revival and Victorian. Smaller clusters exist in the City of Groton. Numerous Shingle Style houses front on Shore Avenue and the western end of Tyler Avenue in the southern part of the City, while a mixture of Greek Revival and Victorian structures can be found along Broad Street, Ramsdelle Street, and Thames Street between Broad and School Streets.

In addition to these areas, there are many outstanding structures and sites scattered throughout the town. These include Fort Griswold, the Victorian style Palmer House and the century-old lighthouse in Noank, and the several fine old homes on Gravel Street in Mystic. A steep rock overlooking lower Water Street and the approaches to Mystic harbor is the site of Fort Rachael, a fortification erected to protect Mystic from the British fleet during the War of 1812. The Copp House on the east side of Thames Street in the City of Groton is an outstanding example of Victorian period architecture worthy of public support in its preservation. Another structure of historical significance is the Daboll Homestead in Center Groton where the Daboll family conducted a school of navigation and nautical astronomy from 1805 to 1873.

The administrative headquarters of the Southeastern Branch of the University of Connecticut are presently housed in the Plant Mansion on the school's new campus at Avery Point. This elaborate Romantic Revival stone mansion was built in 1903 and retains today much of its original interior and exterior elegance. Groton is also the home of the Electric Boat Division of General Dynamics Corporation where the world's first nuclear submarine was launched in 1954. Fort Griswold and the nearby monument and museum, and the Submarine Museum on Thames Street in the City of Groton are features open to the public.

Two historical societies are active in Groton: the Living Heritage Guild and the Noank Historical Society. The Guild is a 3-year-old organization with about 50 members paying annual dues of three dollars each. In addition to promoting historic preservation, the Guild also supports conservation activities and encourages general civic and cultural events. No regular meetings are scheduled, but educational programs are held frequently. A novel event sponsored by the Guild last year was an antique bake sale. Otherwise, the society depends upon its dues and contributed services for its programs. At present the Guild does not have any property interests.

Groton's other historical group is the Noank Historical Society, Inc., founded in 1966, which already boasts more than 500 active members. The Society's headquarters are located in the 65-year-old Grace Episcopal Chapel on Sylvan Street in Noank. The building was presented to the Noank Fire District by the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut for the use of the Noank Historical Society for museum, records storage, and office purposes. The Society assists in maintaining the building.

The Society meets 5 times each year, for which special programs are arranged. Major annual events are a dinner dance in January, the 4th of July celebration which is sponsored by the Society, and the summer exhibitions on display in the headquarters building which is open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays from 2 to 5 p.m., July 4th through Labor Day. The Society's expenses are met from the one-dollar-per-year dues contributed by each member plus proceeds from special fund raising events. The Society is doing research on the old houses and families of Noank, and it is forming collections of memorabilia relating to the seafaring and village life of this quaint seacoast village.

A considerable amount of important



historical research has been done about Groton by Mrs. Eva Butler, a former local resident who now resides in Ledyard. However, actual preservation activities have not kept pace with research. A town of this size and with as much historical significance should do more than just read and write about history. If more active preservation is not practiced soon, this rapidly growing town will soon have few relics from the past to boast about.

Historic district zoning is probably feasible and certainly desirable in Old Mystic, Mystic, Noank, and along Shore Avenue near Eastern Point. Important buildings relating to the battle at Fort Griswold should be preserved, and the fort restored. Local groups should continue to promote awareness, pride, and preservation action on the part of the many persons scattered throughout the town owning buildings of architectural and historical significance.

## LEDYARD

There are few roads in Ledyard that are not adorned with at least one stately Colonial home; forty-nine were found to be distributed throughout the town. In addition, there is a sprinkling of more than a dozen good examples from later architectural periods. There are no major concentrations of these old homes, but a minor group consisting of one example from each of the Colonial, Greek Revival, and Victorian periods is found in Gales Ferry.

Special features in Ledyard include three one-room schools, the vertical sawmill on Iron Street, and the Ledyard Oak. Also of significance is the fact that several of the Colonial homes have remained in the same family for as many as ten generations. Among these old family homesteads in Ledyard are the Averys', Geers', Lambs', and Morgans'. The site of Fort Decatur, built during the War of 1812 by Captain Decatur when his fleet was blockaded by the British in the Thames River, is located in Ledyard, north of Gales Ferry. The vertical sawmill is reported to be the only one of its type remaining in Connecticut. The sawmill and the adjacent pond were purchased by the town in 1967 and are scheduled to serve both the historic interests and the recreational needs of the town. Hopefully, work will continue on the authentic restoration of the mill with a possible assistance grant from the State Historical Commission.

The Ledyard Historical Society consists

of about 200 members concerned with both historic preservation and conservation. In addition to regular quarterly meetings, the Society tries to create and maintain interest through a number of activities. An antique fair and house tours have been successful money raisers. In 1964 an inventory of all pre-1800 homes was made and an illustrated lecture, utilizing colored slides, is being prepared.

The Historical Society owns no property in Ledyard, but uses its funds to maintain town-owned properties, including the sawmill and the town-owned Hill House near the Ledyard Oak. All of this is done without formal agreements or binding restrictions on either the town or the Society. This could be a dangerous approach and could result in preservation funds being wasted on projects which the town later might undo. The Society would do well to secure some form of long-term lease on properties prior to the expenditure of valuable preservation funds.

## LISBON

The SCRPA survey of Lisbon revealed thirty-three structures of architectural value. Two-thirds of these are Colonial, the remainder being Georgian, Greek Revival, and a typical 19th century farmhouse. The closest thing to a cluster is the few Colonial and Greek Revival buildings near the junction of Routes 169 and 138. The town also contains a one-room school at the north end of Ross Hill Road and an excellent stone railroad overpass just east of Versailles Station.

Although Lisbon contains several fine restorations, the most outstanding building in the town is the so-called Haskell House on Ross Hill Road. This magnificent Georgian house has been faithfully restored and beautifully furnished. It has an exceptionally good setting that should be protected along with the house itself. A half-dozen more fine old buildings are located along Ross Hill Road.

The Lisbon Historical Society is small - only 18 members - but active. Its purpose is to preserve things of historical importance and to influence the preservation and use of buildings of architectural significance in Lisbon. Annual dues are five dollars per couple and three dollars for single members. Considerable research has been done concerning old homes in the town and the group hopes someday to be in a position to buy



some of the historic buildings in the town and restore them. The Society meets each month and among its regular events are an annual 18th century dinner and a prize to the writer of the best historical essay in the local elementary school.

## MONTVILLE

The predominant style among the older buildings in Montville is Colonial, but only sixteen good Colonial homes are to be found in the whole town. These are all scattered, as is the case with the few Federal, Greek Revival, and Victorian buildings still existing. Montville also contains a Congregational church built in 1831 for and by Indians and an Indian museum operated by a Mohegan Indian, Chief Harold Tantaquidgeon, and his sister, two of the few surviving Indians in the region. Other historic features in Montville that played roles in Indian history are Cohegan Rock, a former retreat of the great Chief Uncas, and the site of Uncas' fort, now a part of Fort Shantok State Park.

Montville has no historical society although considerable local lore and potential preservation projects exist in the town. Present threats to historic structures are found along Route 32 just north of Uncasville, where at least two old homes could conceivably give way to roadway improvements and commercial expansion at any time.

## NEW LONDON

This is the site of the region's first settlement and its colorful past has produced numerous buildings of historical and architectural significance. Many have been destroyed over the years and still others are scheduled for demolition, but at present sixty-three structures of importance have been identified. These include several very good examples from each of the architectural styles from Colonial to Victorian as well as a dozen miscellaneous features. The distribution is generally throughout the whole city, with a loose gathering in and around the central business district.

Outstanding structures are numerous and include the Shaw Mansion, the Hempstead House, the Deshon Allyn House, the New London Lighthouse, Fort Trumbull, the Old Town Mill, the Nathan Hale School House, the Greek Revival buildings of Whale Oil Row, St. James Church, the

County Court House, the railroad station, the Customs House, the Huguenot House, the Public Library, and the Federal-style house behind St. James Church. These are the most famous structures in the city, but all of those shown in the inventory are important and should be considered for preservation. Also mapped is the home of the late playwright Eugene O'Neill, although the house is not architecturally important.

At present three significant threats to preservation are being felt in New London. First, urban renewal is eliminating irreplaceable historic buildings in the central part of the city. Only through the strong efforts of a few aroused citizens was Whale Oil Row spared. But several others were less fortunate. Soon to be demolished is the railroad station, the last building to be designed by the famous architect Henry Hobson Richardson.

Second, highway construction is expected to reap a good harvest of developed properties in the near future, some of which will probably be good examples of particular architectural periods. Again, public pressure can and should force the investigation of alternative routes and designs to minimize the loss of important structures. If this is not successful, moving structures to new locations should be considered.

Finally, one of the most important landmarks in New London, Fort Trumbull and its nearby powder house, are being threatened. Completed in 1850, the fort remains basically intact, but it has been visually impaired by the location of a steam generating plant, complete with smoke stack, in its central compound. Adjacent to the outside walls are several modern residences for officials at the base and an unsightly red and white water tower. With the proper restoration, Fort Trumbull could become a major historical asset to the region, as attractive as any other old fort in this part of the country.

Of the many historic buildings in New London, several are open to the general public. These include the Hempstead House, the Shaw Mansion, the Deshon Allyn House, the Old Town Mill, and the public buildings, such as the old County Court House, the Library and the railroad station. A valuable asset to the town is the Lyman Allyn Museum, which contains an outstanding collection of American and European paintings, furniture and household articles and a large doll house with 19th century doll furniture, dolls and toys.



The New London County Historical Society is a group of 260 persons who meet regularly once each year and who maintain their membership by paying annual dues of \$2.50 per person. The Society's only property is the Shaw Mansion and its main interest is the maintenance of this important historical building. Endowments take care of staffing and maintenance costs of the property, thus eliminating the need for fund-raising efforts. However, the threats to historic preservation in New London and the many valuable buildings in the city combine to offer a formidable challenge to the Historical Society. The Shaw Mansion is safe, but many other valuable structures could benefit greatly from the attention and action of the Society.

Public preservation action in New London takes several forms. The Old Town Mill is owned and maintained by the City of New London, and the City provides the site for the nearby Nathan Hale School House. The County Court House is the property of the State of Connecticut and is actively used for court purposes. And the 167-year-old New London Lighthouse is operated and preserved by the U.S. Coast Guard.

## NORTH STONINGTON

The numerous Colonial homes scattered throughout North Stonington bear witness to its early settlement and agricultural economy. There are no less than 52 identifiable Colonial houses in the town, in addition to more than two dozen examples of the Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival, and Victorian styles.

A very good concentration of both public and private buildings from all of these periods is found in the Village of North Stonington. The pleasant atmosphere of this old New England village, complete with a church, stores, the town hall, and several fine homes, is a fast-disappearing feature in this area and certainly worthy of preservation. The Village appears to be well suited to preservation through historic district zoning.

Another grouping of local importance to the town is in the Clarks Falls area. Here, a handful of Colonial and Greek Revival houses extend along the road eastward from the old grist mill, an industry from the past that is still operating today. At the western end of this very scenic road, where it intersects with Route 49, is a cluster of three fine Colonial houses. Although historic dis-

trict zoning is a possibility here, other methods of preservation, such as those outlined in the following chapter, should also be explored.

A North Stonington feature of historical importance to Southeastern Connecticut is Lantern Hill. This prominent rock outcropping, which exceeds 500 feet in elevation, was used as a landmark for sailors seeking Connecticut ports, and it served as a site for signal fires during the Revolutionary War. Lantern Hill has been proposed by SCRPA as the focal point for a future state park, but the hill itself contains a valuable deposit of silica which is presently being mined by the Ottawa Silica Company. The mining operation threatens to eventually destroy a major part of the hill. Whether or not enough of this feature will remain for state park use depends upon the extent and direction of future mining activities.

Organized historic preservation activities in North Stonington have been confined to the projects of the Stonington Historical Society, which is concerned with both Stonington and North Stonington. However, this Society is understandably more involved with the preservation of buildings and sites within the Town of Stonington to the possible detriment of North Stonington historic features. North Stonington has both an abundance of potential historic preservation projects and a population size that can support a viable historical society of its own.

## NORWICH

The rich assortment and large number of architecturally important buildings in Norwich is evidence that this community was a hub of economic and cultural activity from the time of its founding in the mid-17th century. Many of these buildings have been well-preserved over the years while others have been neglected and altered. But Norwich today retains the best variety of individual buildings and groupings in Southeastern Connecticut.

An enumeration here of the outstanding individual buildings and sites in Norwich would be both impractical and unnecessary. An excellent book describing these same features was published in 1967 by two residents of the City. Norwich Historic Homes and Families, by Marion K. O'Keefe and Catherine Smith Doroshevich, published in cooperation with the Society of the Founders of Norwich, Connecticut, Inc., describes 88 buildings and sites in Norwich and provides a historical com-



mentary on each.

Of equal or greater significance than the individual buildings and sites are the several concentrations of structures that give distinctive character to different sections of the City. The best concentration in Norwich -- and certainly one of the most important in the region -- is the Norwichtown Historic District. First settled in 1659, this area contains sixty-five 17th, 18th and early 19th century buildings arranged around the Norwichtown Green, the Old Burial Grounds, and the picturesque Lowthorpe Meadow. The Leffingwell Inn stands at the southern end of this impressive area.

Just west of the Historic District is a scattered cluster of more than twenty Colonial buildings, bisected by the Connecticut Turnpike. The area, referred to locally as Bean Hill, has seen considerable commercialization in recent years, but still has good potential as a historic district. The focal point of this grouping is a green, surrounded by several stately Colonial houses and an old church now used as a furniture store.

Taftville is another good concentration of important buildings in the Town of Norwich. Dominated by the imposing Ponemah Mill, the village contains scores of well-preserved mill houses located on a grid network of streets immediately west of the mill.

Closer in toward the center of Norwich is a small cluster of Victorian houses along Prospect Street. Other predominantly Victorian concentrations are found along Cliff Street, McKinley Avenue, Broad Street, upper Broadway, and Laurel Hill Avenue. The "West Side" section of the City contains many Victorian and a few Greek Revival buildings that bear witness to an age of former affluence in that area. A particularly good cluster of Victorian houses is found in the area bounded by Fairmount, Coit, Asylum, and Main Streets.

An excellent lineal concentration is also found along Broadway between Union Square and St. Patrick's Cathedral. In this area Broadway is almost solidly lined with Greek Revival houses, with some excellent Georgian structures near the upper end of the area. Another very interesting mixed row is found along Washington Street between Washington Square and Chelsea Parade. This area includes good examples from almost every architectural period referred to in this study.

Norwich contains several buildings that are open to the public. Foremost

among these is Leffingwell Inn, the result of one of the finest restorations in New England. In 1956 the State of Connecticut deeded the Inn and the land on which it is now located to the Founders Society for one dollar and other considerations, to be open to the public as a historic house and museum. The Founders Society moved, restored and furnished the building, and now maintains and operates it as a museum. Both the Rockwell House and the Backus House on Rockwell Street are owned and maintained as museums by the Faith Trumbull Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. Another museum in Norwich, which is now open throughout the year, is the Slater Memorial on the campus of the Norwich Free Academy. This impressive Richardsonian structure has among its exhibits a small, but good, collection of 18th and 19th century furniture and Indian relics.

The Society of the Founders of Norwich, with more than 1,000 members, ranks as the largest historical society in the region. The full Society meets annually, at which time a special program is provided. The executive board of the Society meets as needed, and special exhibitions are arranged for the membership throughout the year.

Over the years the Founders have marked numerous buildings and sites throughout the City and have been responsible for the restoration of the silversmith's shop on the Norwichtown Green, which is now leased for office use to a local architect. But its chief concern has been the restoration of the Leffingwell Inn and its operation as a museum. The Society paid \$110,000 for the relocation and restoration of this important landmark and has an existing debt of only \$14,000 on the project. Contributions by historically minded persons from all economic levels made this endeavor possible.

The Founders played a leading role in the 1967 effort to establish the Norwichtown Historic District. Both of the organization's properties are located in the District and it is interested in eventually acquiring and restoring the old Colonial brick schoolhouse on Washington Street in the District. Another schoolhouse of the same period and similar design faces the Norwichtown Green and is maintained and used by the City of Norwich as a polling place.

Historic preservation activities in Norwich have in the past been primarily concerned with the Colonial period. Pride on the part of individual owners of Greek Revival and Victorian style houses has resulted in the preservation of architectural quality in some areas, but



the lack of pride and financial capabilities are also in evidence, especially on the fringes of the down-town area. In recent years many properties have been tastefully improved along Broadway and Washington Street. In most instances these buildings were converted into professional offices or rental apartments. Much potential for similar rehabilitation projects remains in the central city area. Hopefully, some of this potential may be realized through the City's future urban renewal programs.

## PRESTON

In spite of its close proximity to Norwich, Preston has maintained a decidedly rural character. The town is liberally sprinkled with Colonial houses, forty of which were identified in connection with this study. In addition, there are sixteen good examples of the Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival, and Victorian styles.

The most significant cluster of buildings in this town is found at Preston City which contains more than a dozen fine structures. Included in this grouping are several Colonial, Georgian, and Federal houses, a Greek Revival Church, and an operable blacksmith's shop. The latter is owned by a local resident, Mr. Albert P. Steffenson, who opens it to visitors by appointment. Another important grouping of old buildings exists in Poquetanuck. Although there are more than a dozen old structures in this grouping too, they are not as well preserved in either condition or appearance as the buildings in Preston City.

Much historic preservation has been carried on in Preston for the past six years by the Preston Historical Society, a 100-member organization dedicated to promoting the history of the town and making the residents more aware of their local heritage. Regular bi-monthly meetings feature speakers or other programs. Special activities in the past have included a "trash and treasure" sale, a house tour, and a highly successful all-day symposium on historic preservation. In addition to their educational value, all of these activities were financially beneficial to the Society. The Society has inventoried the graves in all of the local cemeteries and has published this information. Accurate records of the names of persons buried in each cemetery are maintained in the town hall. Many of the cemeteries have been improved and several are maintained by members of the Society.

Just this year the Society sponsored the publication of a book about old homes in Preston. The book was written by Mrs. Marion Hall, a member of the Society, with the assistance of other members and local residents. Other members are engaged in other forms of historical research about the town and in marking sites and buildings of local significance. The Society offers an annual prize for an essay by a student in the Preston elementary school system.

One of the most interesting buildings in the region is the Long Society Congregational Church just off Route 165 near the Norwich town line. The church was originally built as a meeting house in 1726. It was beautifully renovated by the church members in recent years, and the surrounding graveyard was improved by members of the Historical Society. At the present time, the building is leased by the Historical Society which maintains and opens it to visitors by appointment. A potential threat to this important structure is the adjacent automobile junk yard. Unless an effective buffer is maintained between the church and the junk yard, the latter could erode the appearance of, and eventually the interest in preserving, this historic building.

## SALEM

Although the number of old buildings in Salem is not large, they add much to the character and scenery of certain parts of the town. One Victorian, seven Greek Revival, and eighteen Colonial buildings were identified in this survey. These are scattered throughout the town, with a locally significant concentration centered around the Town Green on Route 85. A particularly scenic area in the southwestern part of the town is further enhanced by the lineal distribution of predominantly Colonial houses along Darling Road.

In addition to its old buildings, Salem contains the site of the Music Vale Seminary, the first normal school of music in the nation authorized to confer academic degrees. It attracted students from throughout North America and brought fame to its founder, Oramel Whittlesey, a native of Salem. The site of the school has been marked by the state and is found on the west side of Route 85, about a half-mile south of the Town Green.

In spite of its heritage, Salem has no formal historical society, but the town is blessed with several residents with the knowledge and ability to constitute



a very worthwhile society. As the town grows, such a group could give valuable advice and leadership in community efforts to retain the character and identity that exists today in Salem.

## SPRAGUE

Although it is one of the smallest towns in the region, Sprague has a remarkable variety of historically and architecturally significant buildings. Twelve Colonial and two Georgian and Federal houses are scattered throughout the town. A very good concentration exists in Hanover, where buildings representative of several periods are centered on a green. Potash Hill Road, east of Hanover, has an excellent Saltbox house and an impressive Georgian house along its frontage.

However, the feature historical attraction in Sprague is the village of Baltic, a mid-19th century mill village that has survived largely intact to the present time. At the time of its construction in 1856, the massive granite mill "was considered the largest cotton mill on the continent, employing 900 hands."\* Nearby are about 125 duplex mill houses, large storage buildings, a grist mill, and an old railroad station. No other mill village in the region has such a quality, quantity, and variety of buildings. Action to preserve this unique village should be a major concern of the residents of both the village itself and the town as a whole. The best approach to preservation here appears to be an educational program to make the property-owners of the area aware of the significance and importance of the village. Once pride and interest have been stimulated, the possibilities for historic district zoning should be explored.

One building in the village is assured of preservation. The old grist mill has been purchased by the town and is being renovated for use as a community center. Those involved with the renovations intend to retain the present exterior appearance of the structure. It would be desirable to obtain similar commitments with regard to other buildings in the village, especially the mill itself. Inappropriate structural changes or additions to certain buildings could do irreparable damage to the aesthetic and architectural value of the village.

Although Sprague lacks a historical

society at the present time, interest in forming such an organization is being explored. Needless to say, a historical group in Sprague will have numerous potential projects to work on.

## STONINGTON

Our rich historical and architectural heritage is probably more apparent in Stonington than in any other town of Southeastern Connecticut. The town has a very generous assortment of buildings from all of the architectural periods which may be found in every part of the municipality. In addition, there are concentrations of important structures in several areas.

More than 150 individual buildings were identified in the town of Stonington as being good examples of the architecture of a particular period of history. (This does not include structures within the Village of Stonington, which will be discussed later.) A total of sixty-four Colonial, Georgian, and Federal, thirty-seven Greek Revival, and forty-four Victorian styled buildings were noted in the survey.

The number and quality of houses surviving from the 18th century bears witness to a healthy economy in those days, heavily based on agriculture. This is indicated by the numerous Colonial style houses found along the roads of the town away from the coast. The great wealth produced by shipbuilding, whaling and sealing, and the textile industry during the 19th and early 20th centuries is reflected in the many Greek Revival and Victorian structures located nearer to the coast.

Stonington's important concentrations are found in communities along its irregular coastline. Pawcatuck has a very good lineal grouping of more than a dozen Victorian houses extending along West Broad and Moss Streets, and Old Mystic, which straddles the Stonington-Groton town line, is a very picturesque collection of predominantly Colonial and Greek Revival buildings along Route 27 and the North Stonington Road. A scattering of Colonial, Greek Revival, and Victorian homes throughout Mystic gives that community an identity that should be preserved. Small clusters of Greek Revival and Victorian homes are found along both Willow and Church Streets in Mystic.

\* The Connecticut Guide. Emergency Relief Commission, Hartford, 1935.



The Village of Stonington is by far the most important concentration of historically and architecturally outstanding buildings and sites in this region. In an area of roughly 275 acres south of the New Haven Railroad right-of-way there are almost 400 structures, the majority of which are well preserved houses, shops, churches, and public buildings that have survived in good condition since the 18th and 19th centuries when Stonington was a busy port. A large number of buildings in the Village are important in their own right, but their location in close proximity to one another adds greatly to their value. The coastal location and the maritime features, such as the lighthouse, the marinas, the presence of Connecticut's last fishing fleet, and the historic site of the battle with the British fleet during the War of 1812 - all of these features contribute to the uniqueness of Stonington Village.

The Town of Stonington also contains the widely known Mystic Seaport, discussed previously. The Seaport will doubtless remain the most prominent historic preservation feature in the region for many years to come, continuing to focus attention on Stonington. Not far from the Seaport is the Denison Homestead. Maintained by the Denison Society, this interesting house has its several rooms restored to reflect the different periods of history it has survived. Old Mystic contains the Indian and Colonial Research Center, a repository for the writings, research material, and artifacts accumulated by Mrs. Eva Butler.

Historic preservation has been practiced in Stonington for many years by the Stonington Historical Society. The Society, which claims more than 425 members, meets annually, but special lectures and programs are scheduled more frequently. Special events, such as the lecture programs, a cemetery tour and house tours, are used, along with the two-dollar membership dues, for the restoration of the Whitehall Mansion, an early 18th century house that was moved out of the path of Interstate Route 95 and deeded to the Society.

In addition to the Whitehall Mansion, the Society owns several other properties. The Stonington Lighthouse, the first lighthouse to be erected by the federal government along the Connecticut coast, is now a museum. The Old Stone Bank on Cannon Square is leased by the Society to the Hartford National Bank, and the Greek Revival Arcade building on Water Street is owned by the Society and contains three rental apartments. The Society maintains a library of genealogical and historical books and information in the

basement of the public library which has been used extensively by visitors to Stonington. The organization is also working on a cemetery inventory and a historical aid to education that will be made available to local schools.

Members of the Stonington Historical Society receive a quarterly newspaper, "Historical Footnotes," which is published by the Society and contains lively articles relating to local historic persons and events.

Historic preservation efforts in the Town of Stonington must eventually be concentrated on the Village area. In spite of its value and attractiveness, this whole area is devoid of land use controls of any type. Mere chance, plus individual interest and pride on the part of property owners, has preserved the Village. These same property owners, however, have to date avoided the use of protective zoning and have trusted to luck that no harmful land uses will infringe upon the present charm and solitude of the Village. Under these conditions, it is only a matter of time before a crisis situation develops between the historically-minded residents and the commercial interests. Zoning for the entire Village, preferably in combination with historic district regulations, should be a matter of the utmost urgency for the residents of this most important historic area.

## VOLUNTOWN

Voluntown is only sparsely settled today and more than half of the town lies within the area of the Pachaug State Forest. Nevertheless, our survey identified twenty-two buildings of good quality dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. No significant concentrations exist, but a few buildings are of particular interest. These include the 1838 church on Route 138 in the village of Voluntown; the old Robbins Tavern with the interesting jerkin head roof, also on Route 138, east of the village; the row of one-and-a-half story mill houses with typical Greek Revival eyebrow-windows, located in the village; and a one-room school on Route 49 at Wylie School Road.

Voluntown has no historical society and evidences little in the way of preservation efforts.



## WATERFORD

In proportion to its size, Waterford has relatively few very good buildings surviving from the 18th and 19th centuries. In the course of this survey thirty-seven sites and structures of historical or architectural merit were identified, and these are scattered throughout the municipality, with no significant clusters. However, many of Waterford's old structures are excellent examples of their particular period and style of construction. Among these are the Greek Revival style Baptist churches on Rope Ferry and Great Neck Roads; the 1876 Gilead Chapel facing Interstate Route 95, a good example of the Carpenter Gothic style, with "board and batten" siding; the 42-room Italian Villa style mansion at Harkness Memorial State Park; three one-room schools, one of which was given to the local historical society by the Connecticut Bank and Trust Company; and a very good Victorian house on the west side of Great Neck Road, south of the Great Neck School. A site of local interest, containing the foundations of several 18th century houses, is located in the northwestern part of the town.

While no major concentration of buildings exists in the town, there is a small cluster of Greek Revival and Victorian buildings along Route 156 near the head of the Jordan River. The southern end of Great Neck Road offers more than a half-dozen structures from the Colonial, Greek Revival, and Victorian periods, as well as a beautiful view of the tidal marshes and coastal lands fronting on Long Island Sound.

The Waterford Historical Society is an incorporated organization, founded in 1967 and having about 150 members at the present time. The Society's founding occurred in the same year that a history of the town was published by a local historian.\* Both the founding of the Society and the publication were direct results of a 1966 Waterford Adult Education course entitled "Yesterday's Waterford," conducted by Mr. Bachman. The Society's immediate concern is how best to utilize the one-room school which it owns and which is temporarily stored behind the Hall of Records. A suggestion that it eventually be combined with other old, restored buildings in a cluster seems to have considerable merit. This may be a solution to the problem of preserving other important buildings in the town which are more apt to be neglected in

their comparatively isolated locations. Two such buildings are the Gilead Church and the one-room brick school along the north frontage road of I-95. Commercial or industrial expansion in this area could threaten the existence of these buildings in the near future. The movement of these and similarly valuable buildings to form a single cluster could be a great scenic and cultural asset to the Town of Waterford.

\* \* \*

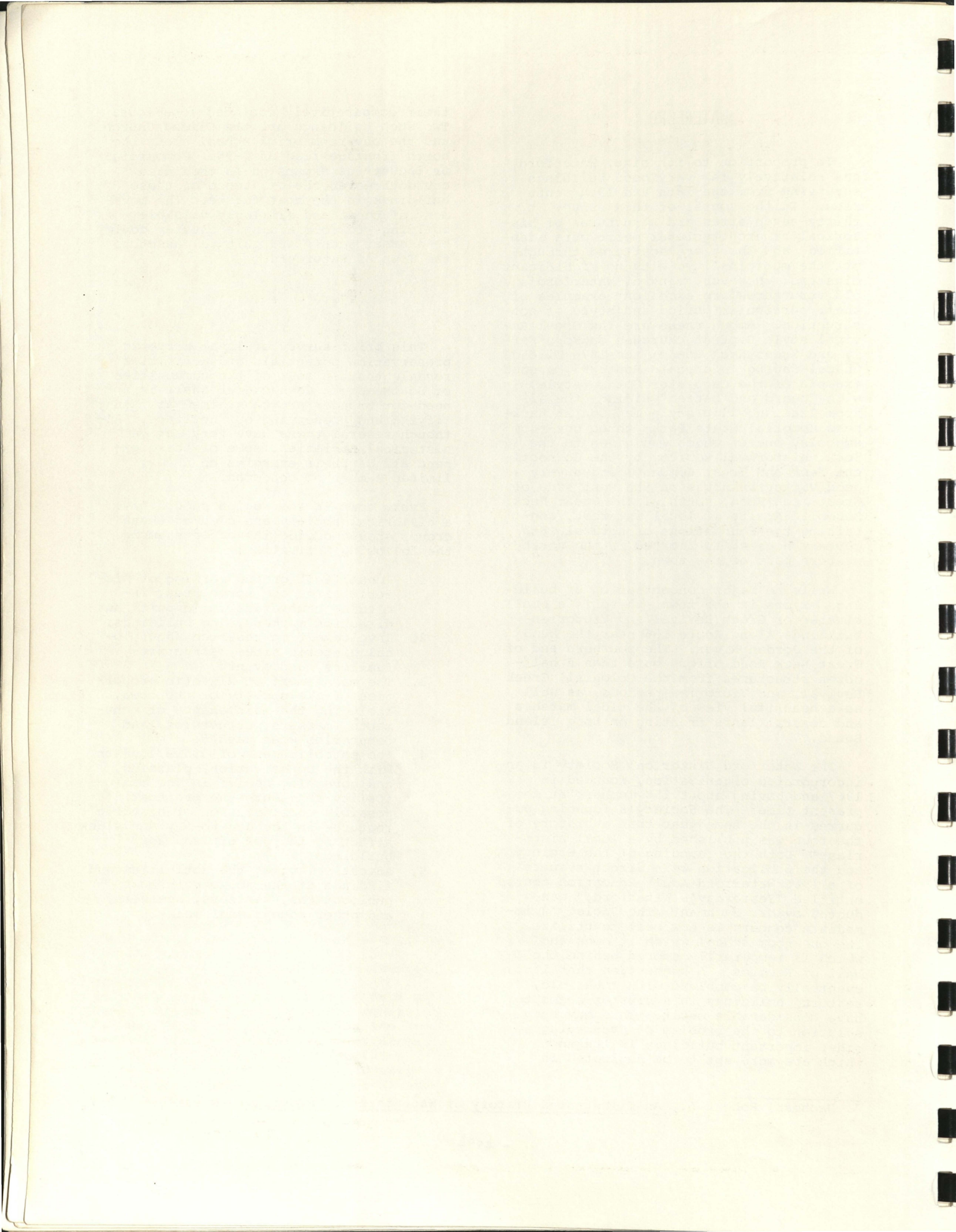
This brief survey of local historic preservation potentials and activities reveals that in most of the communities of Southeastern Connecticut there is a need for broader programs aimed at identifying and preserving our heritage. Although several towns have very active historical societies, some of these expend all of their energies on a very limited number of concerns.

Every town in the region should have a historical society and each of these groups should divide its efforts among the following activities:

1. Identification and marking of historic sites and structures, including cemeteries, mile posts and direction markers, and buildings.
2. Involvement in research about local historic sites, structures, families, and events.
3. The management of historic properties of the society or the town, including the maintenance of monuments, markers, structures, and cemeteries when needed.
4. The establishment of close liaison with the conservation, planning, and governing bodies in the municipality to assure the greatest possible consideration of historic features in the day-to-day decisions affecting the use of land and buildings.
5. Advertisement of the activities and findings of the society through publications, seminars, speakers, and other educational means.

\* Bachman, Robert L. An Illustrated History of Waterford, Connecticut. Waterford, 1967.







# BOZRAH

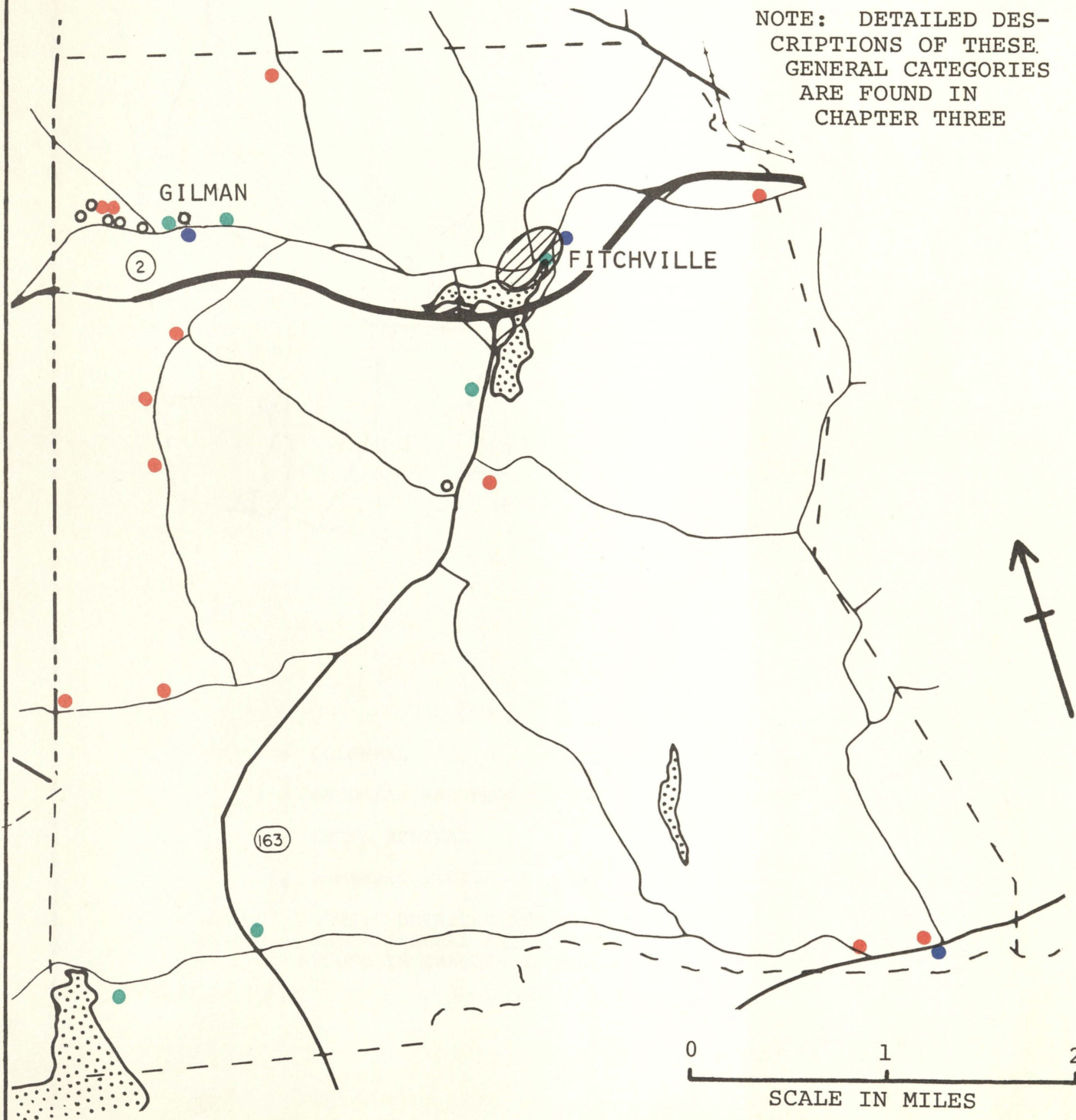
## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - MILLS, MILL HOUSES, ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS, STONE HOUSES, GROUPINGS, AND BARNs

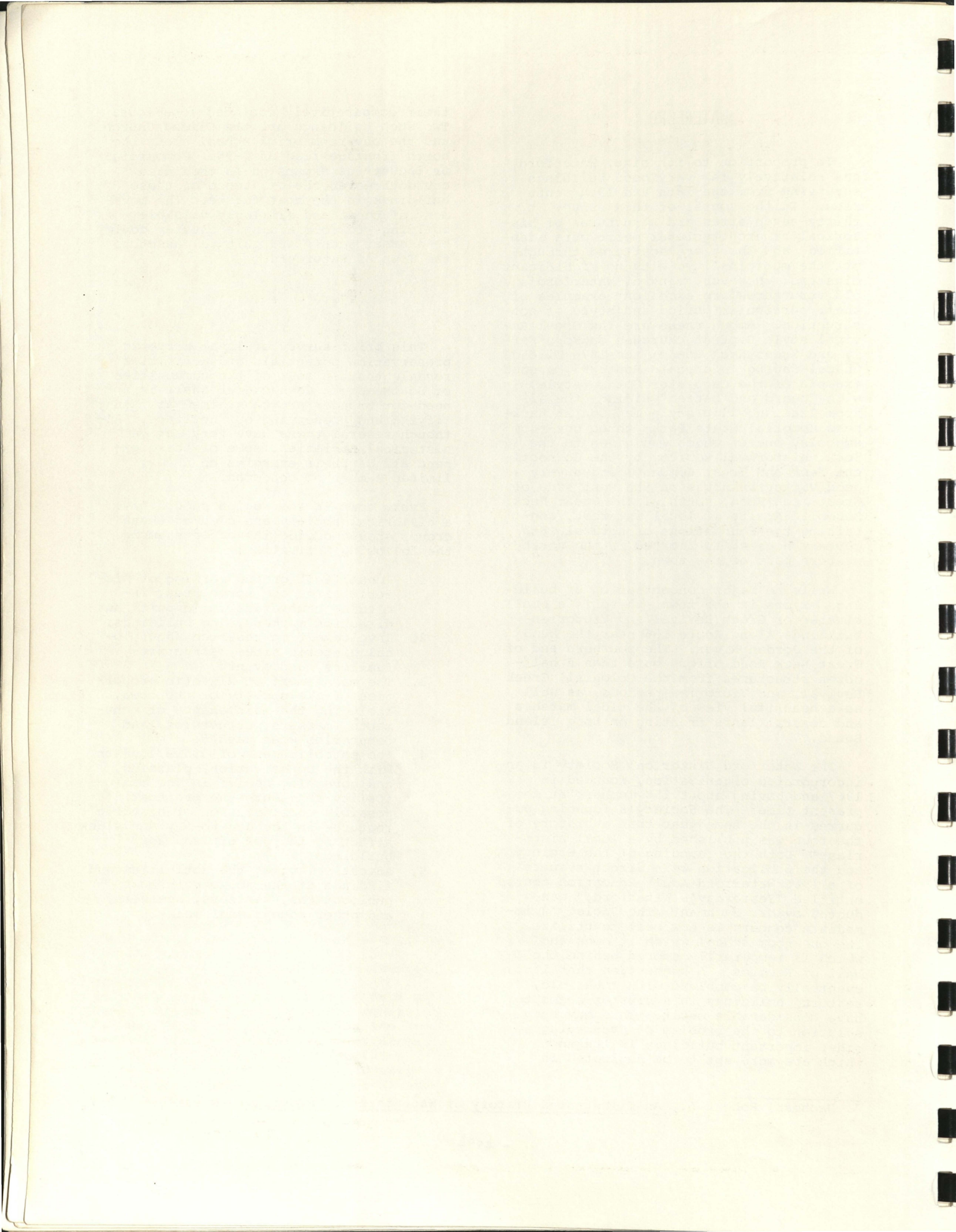
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NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE



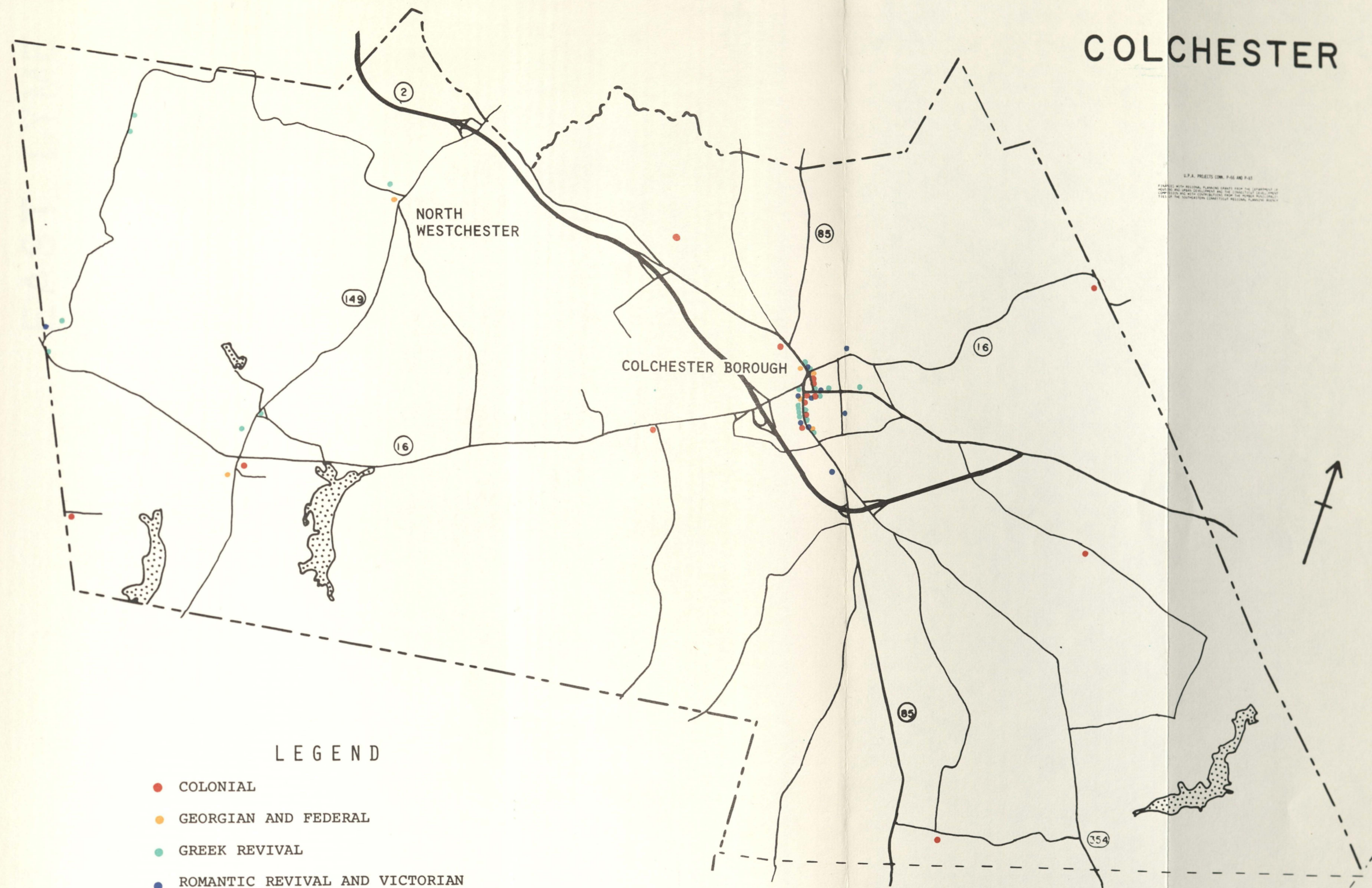






# COLCHESTER

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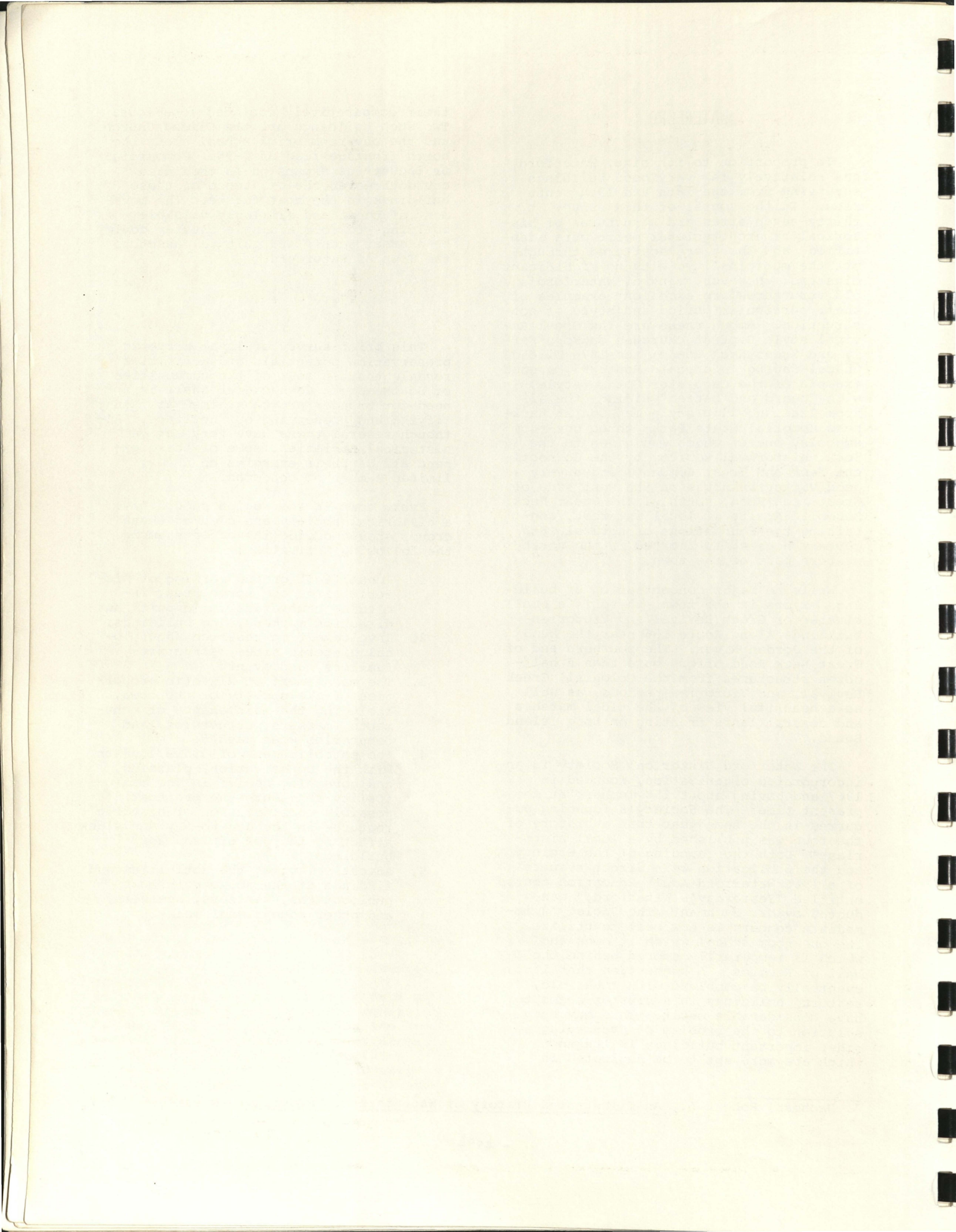
## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN

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 THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE  
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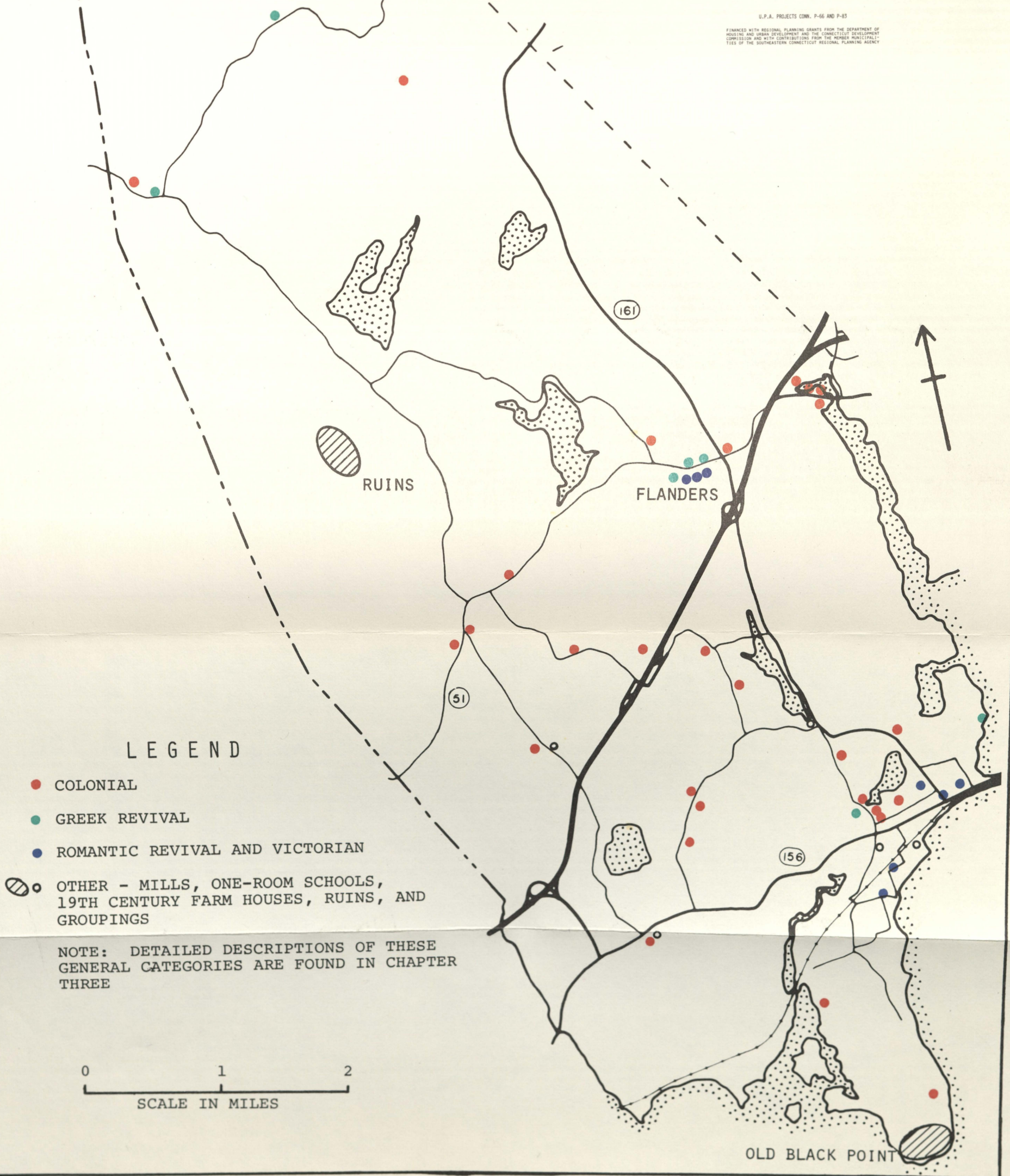




# EAST LYME

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## LEGEND

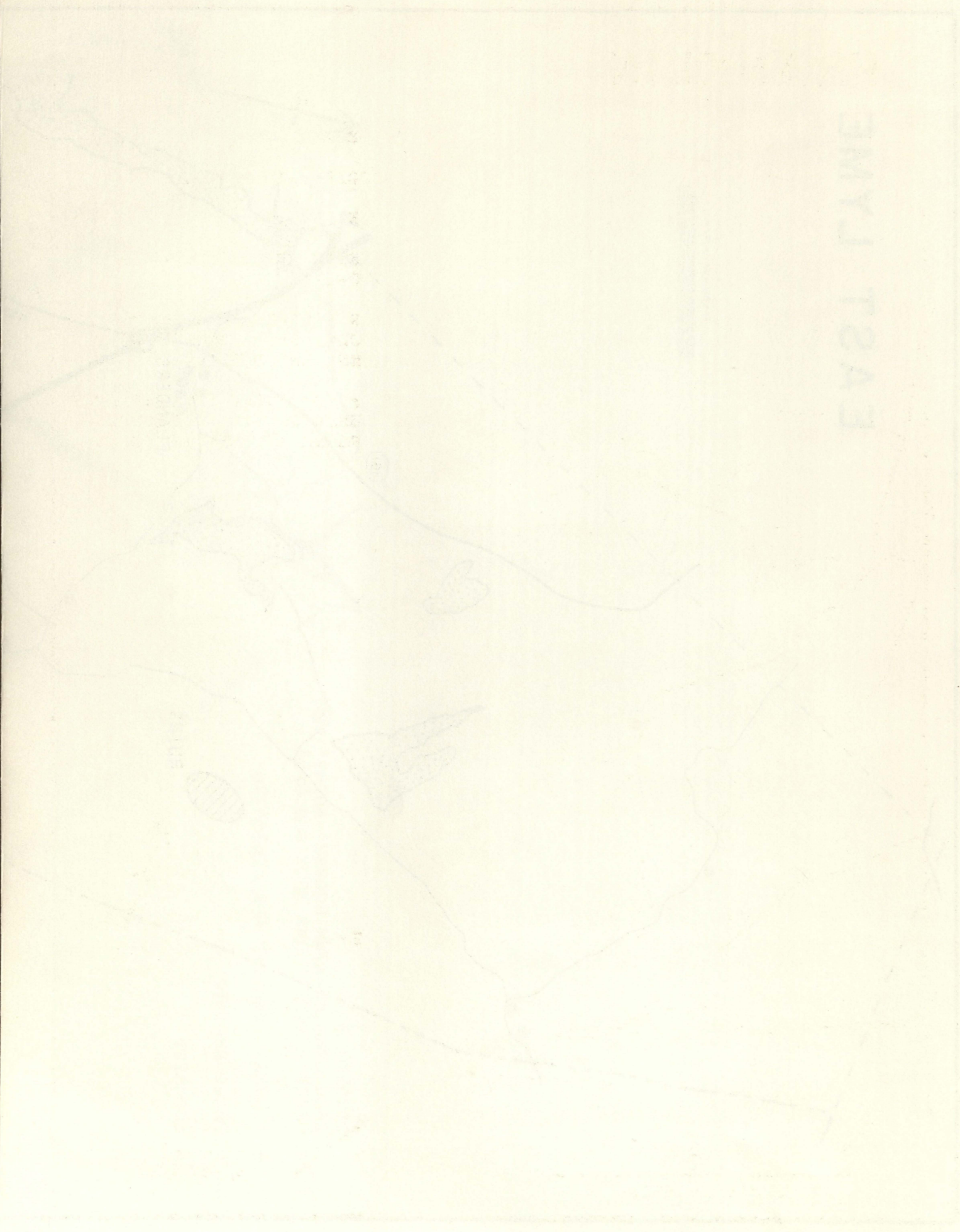
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- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - MILLS, ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS, 19TH CENTURY FARM HOUSES, RUINS, AND GROUPINGS

NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE

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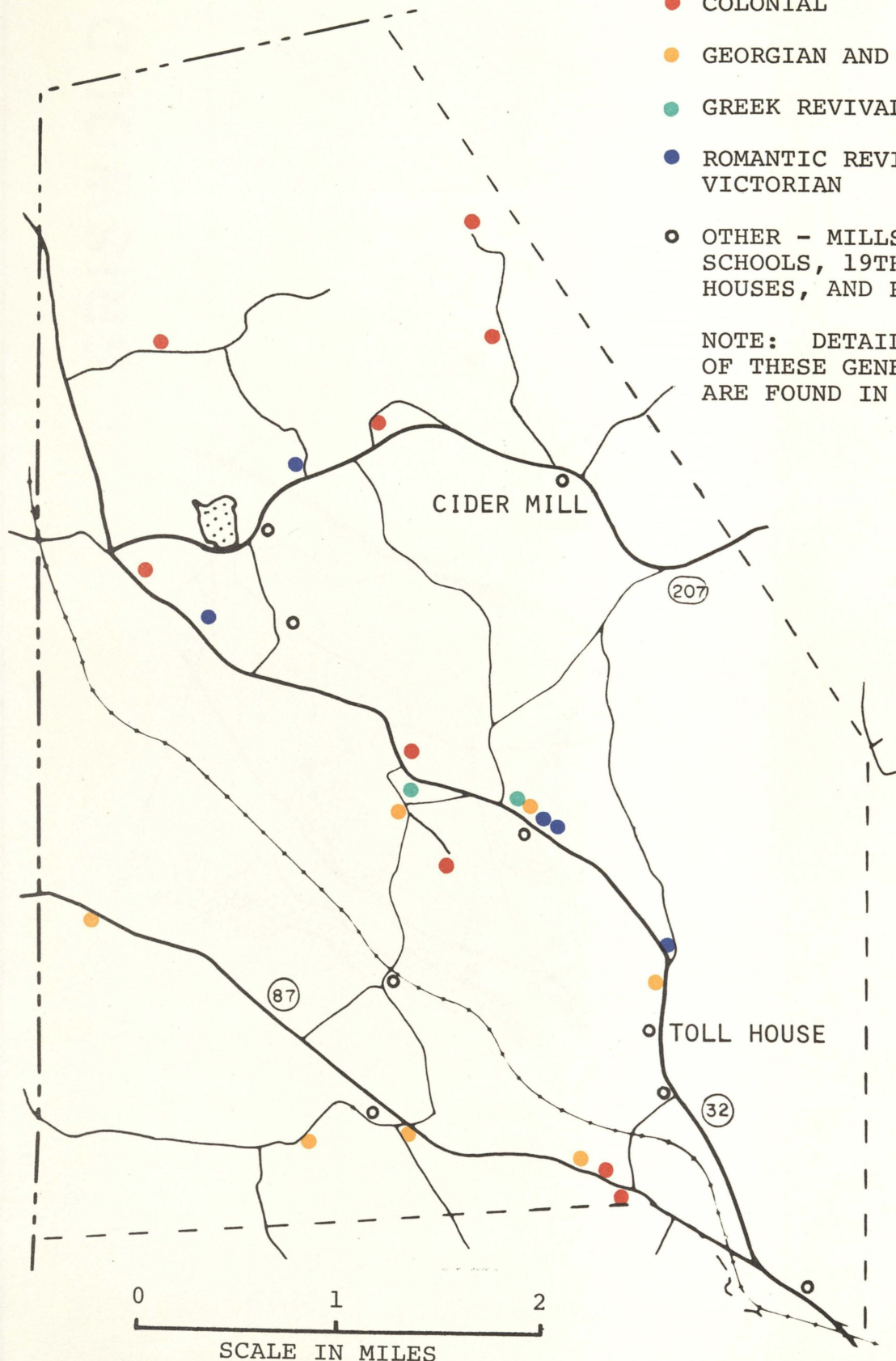


# FRANKLIN

## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - MILLS, ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS, 19TH CENTURY FARM HOUSES, AND RUINS

NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE

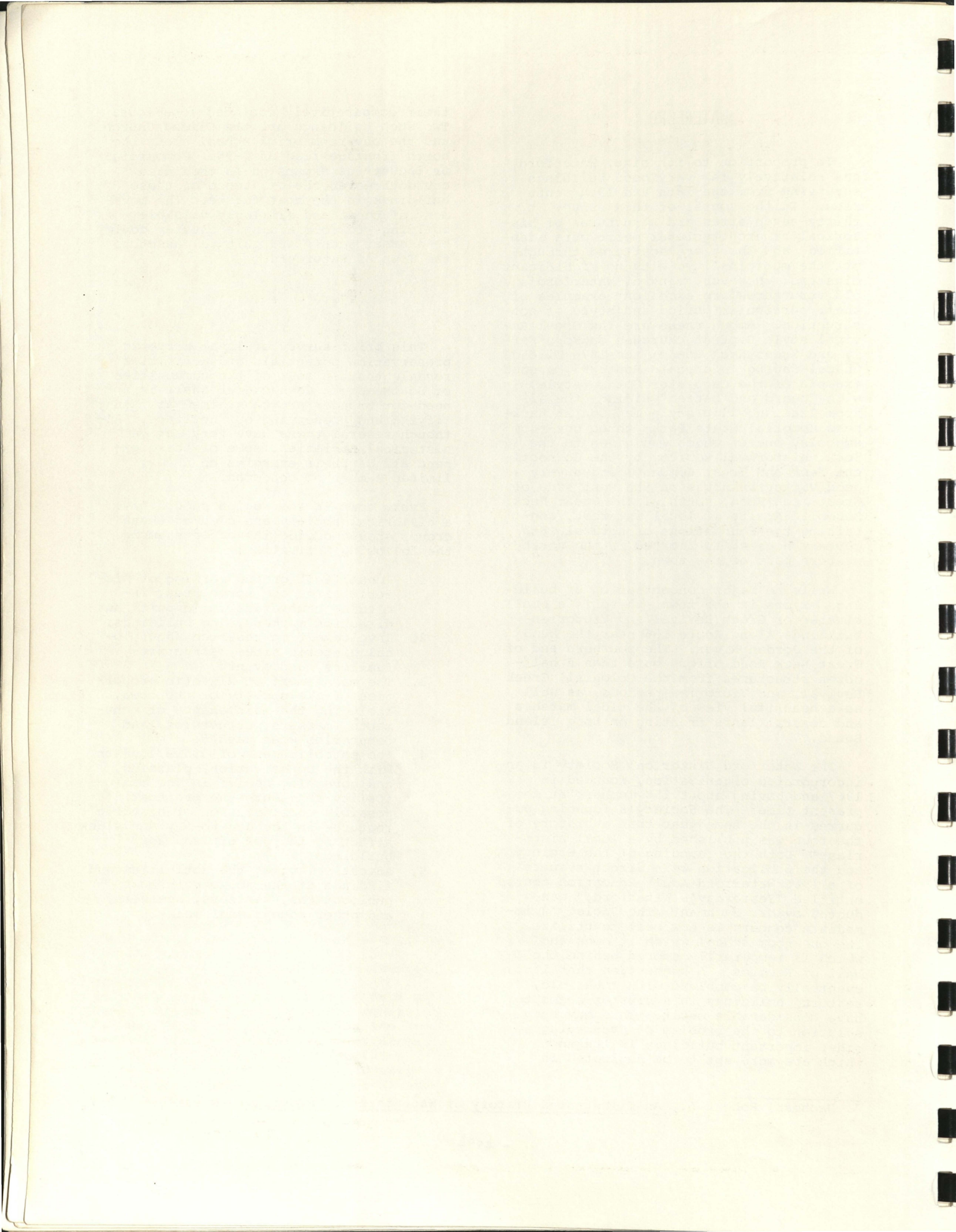


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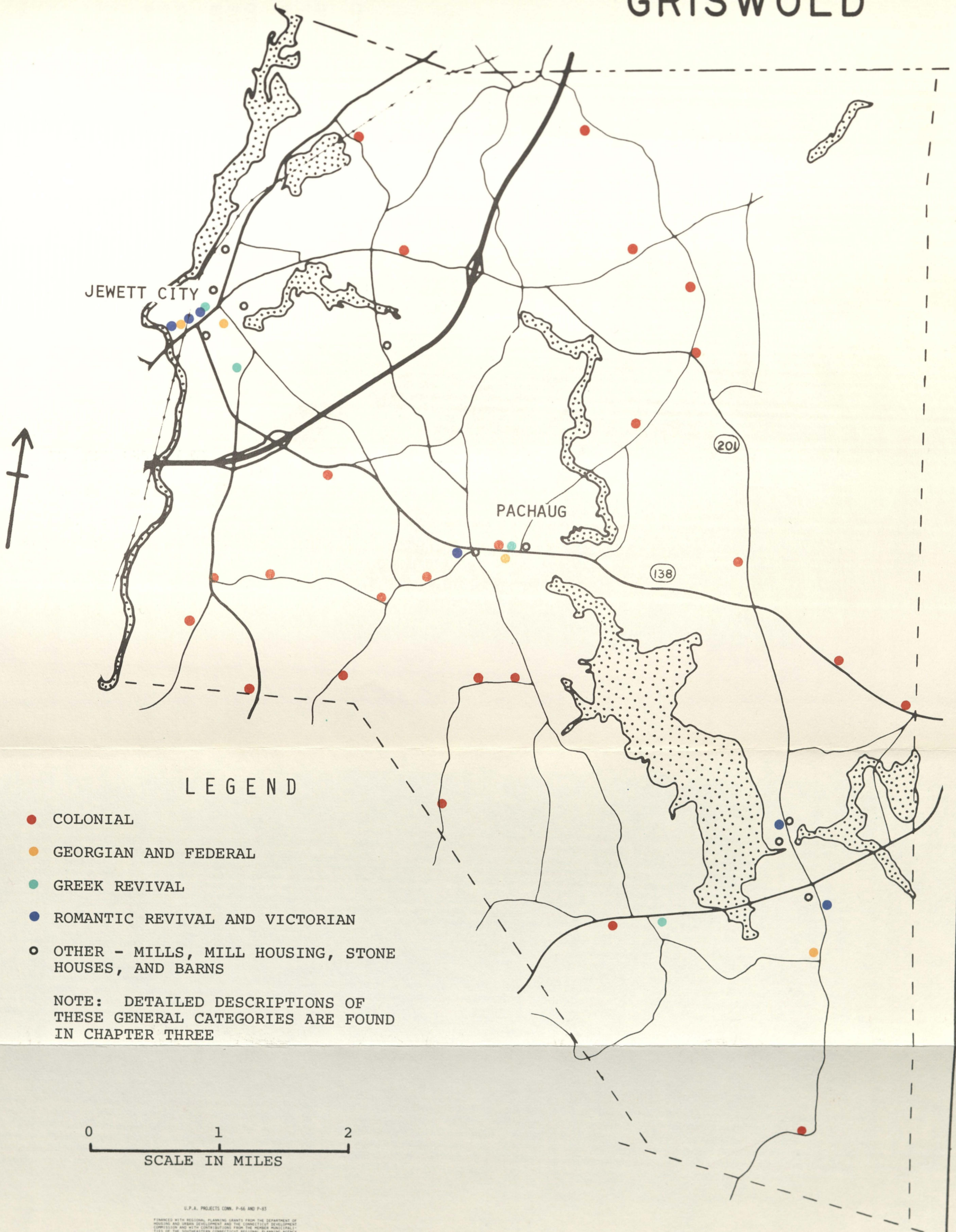
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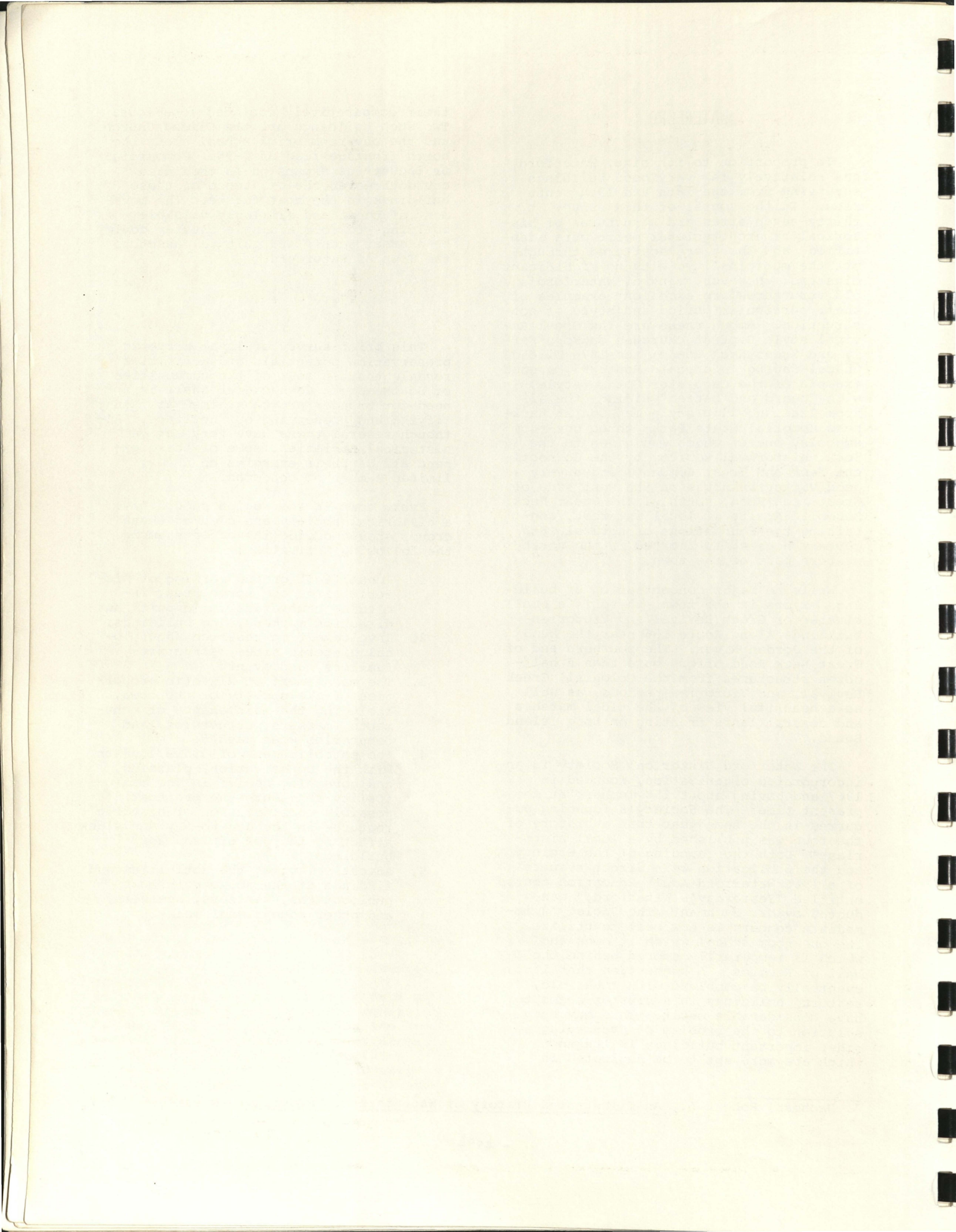




# GRISWOLD









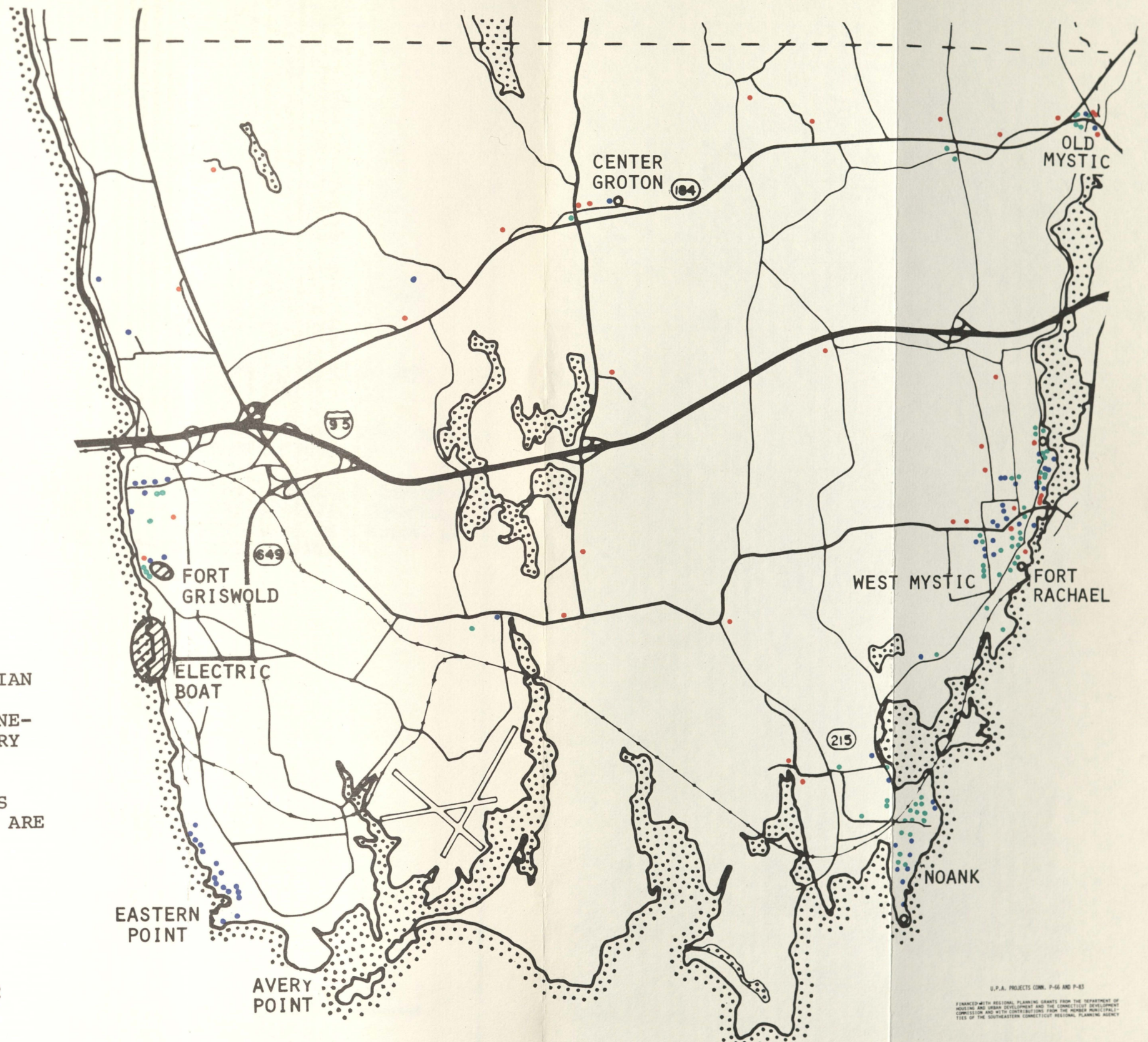
# GROTON

## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
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- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - FORT, LIGHTHOUSE, ONE-ROOM SCHOOL, AND 19TH CENTURY HOUSES

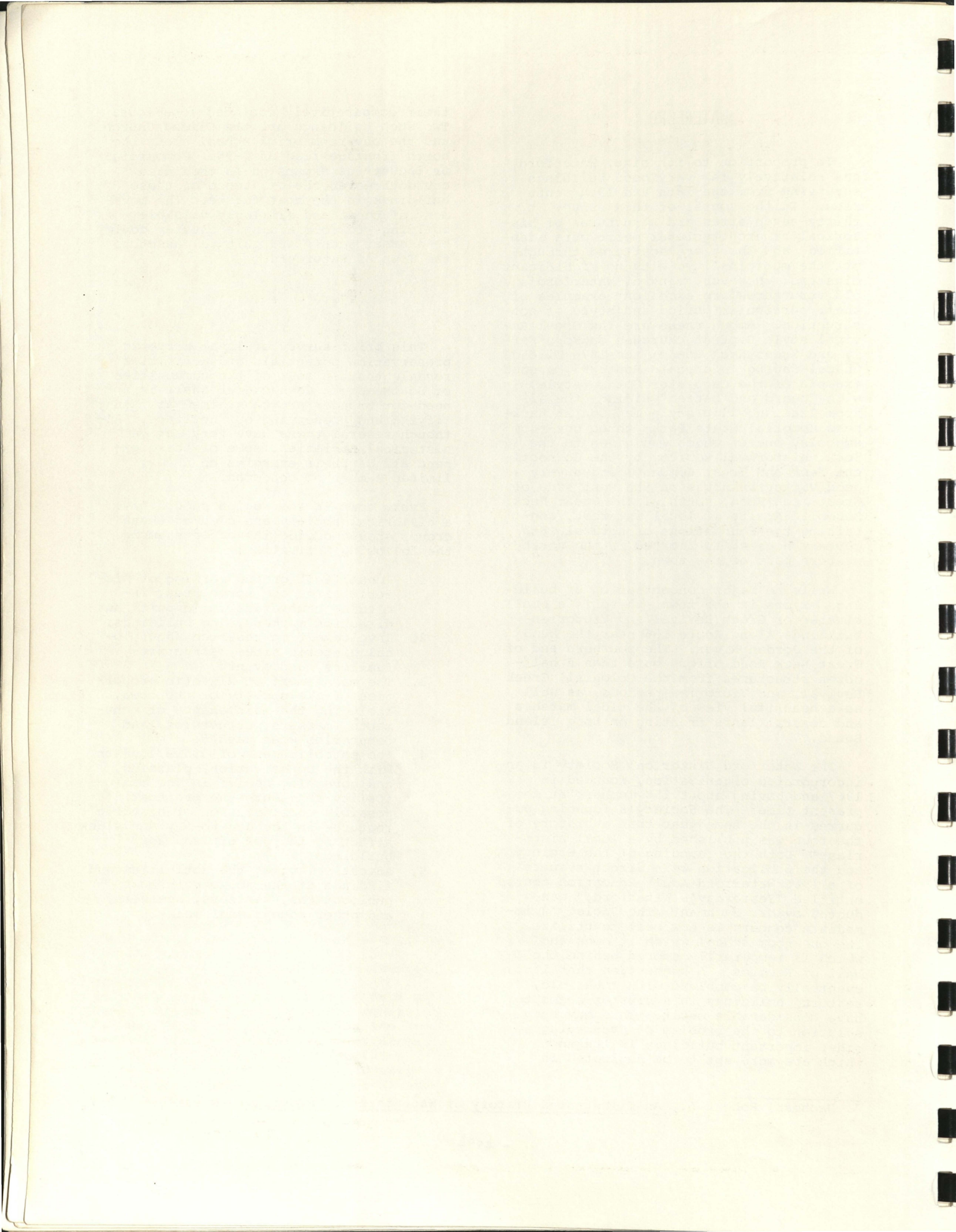
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HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE HARTFORD METROPOLITAN  
DISTRICT OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY







# LEDYARD

## LEGEND

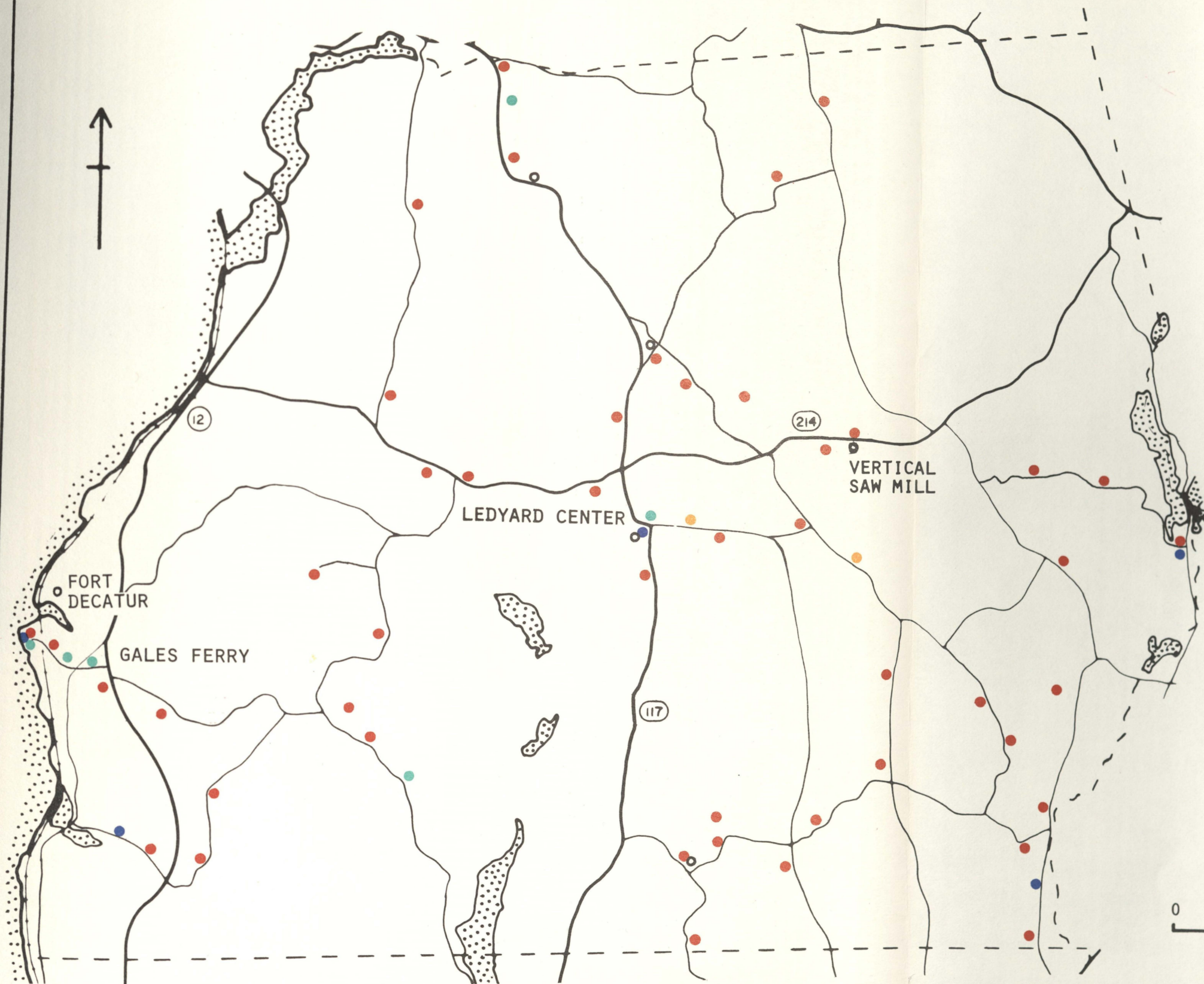
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- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - FORT SITE, AND ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS

NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE

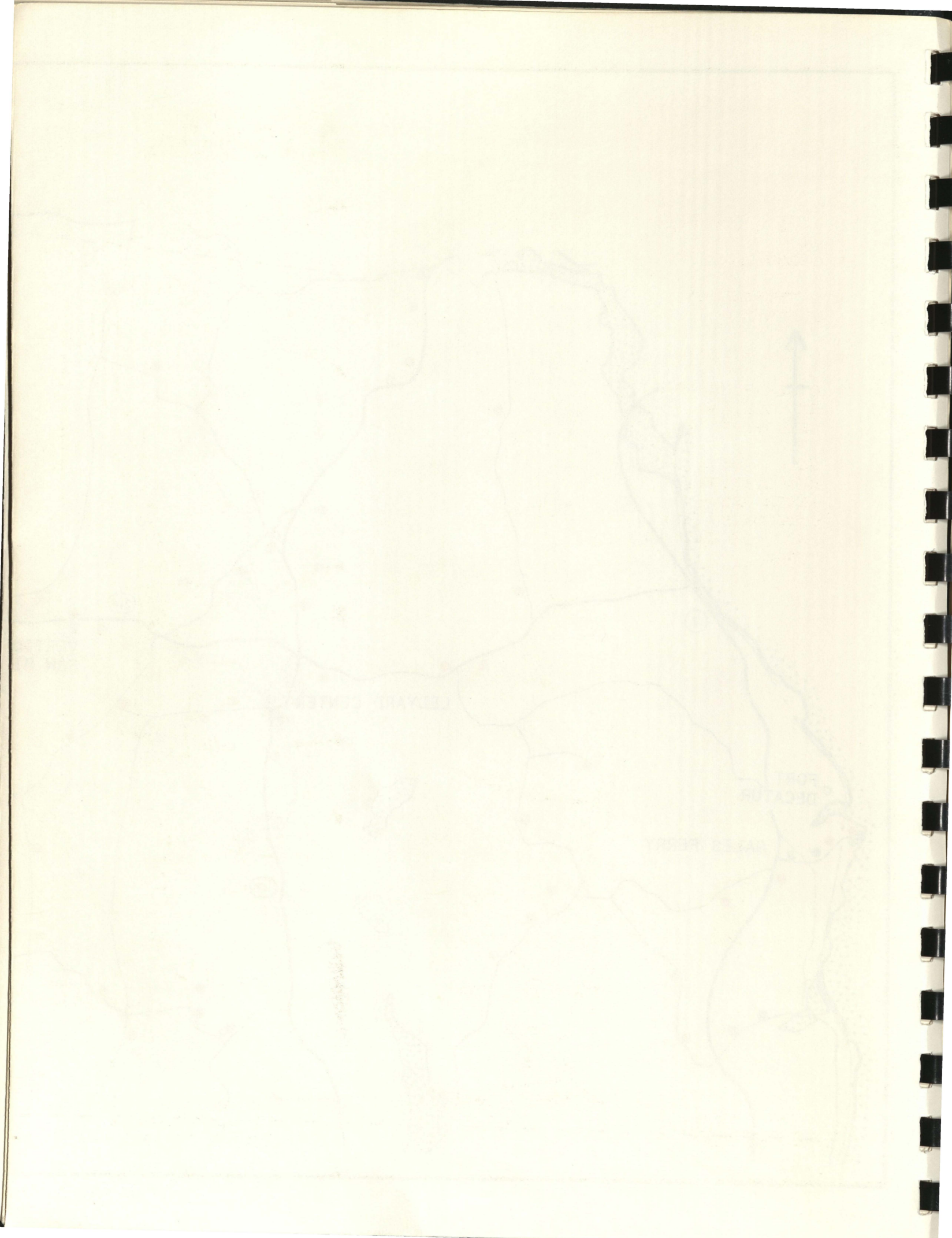
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FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

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SCALE IN MILES







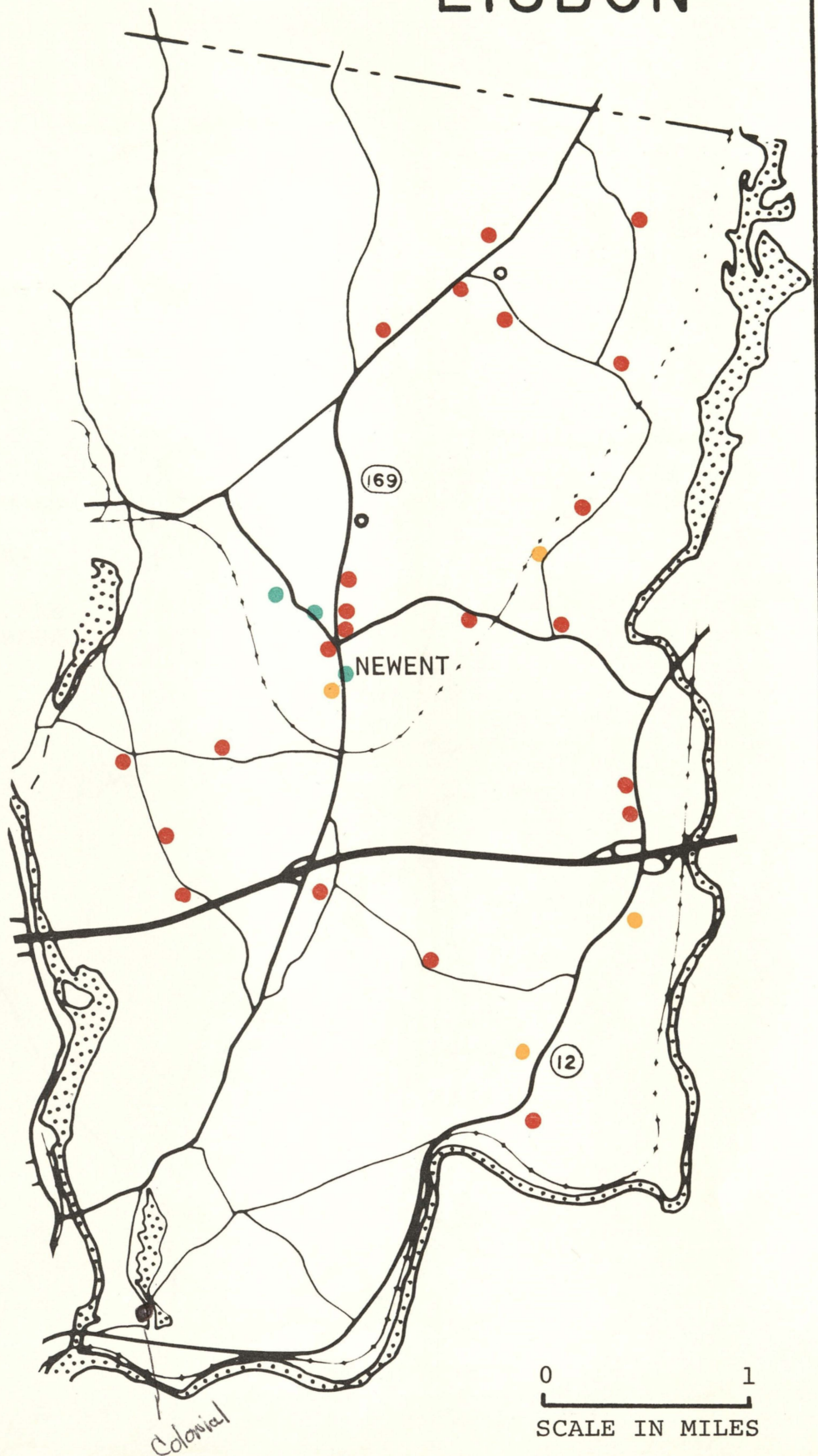


# LISBON

## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- OTHER - ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS, AND 19TH CENTURY HOUSE

NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE

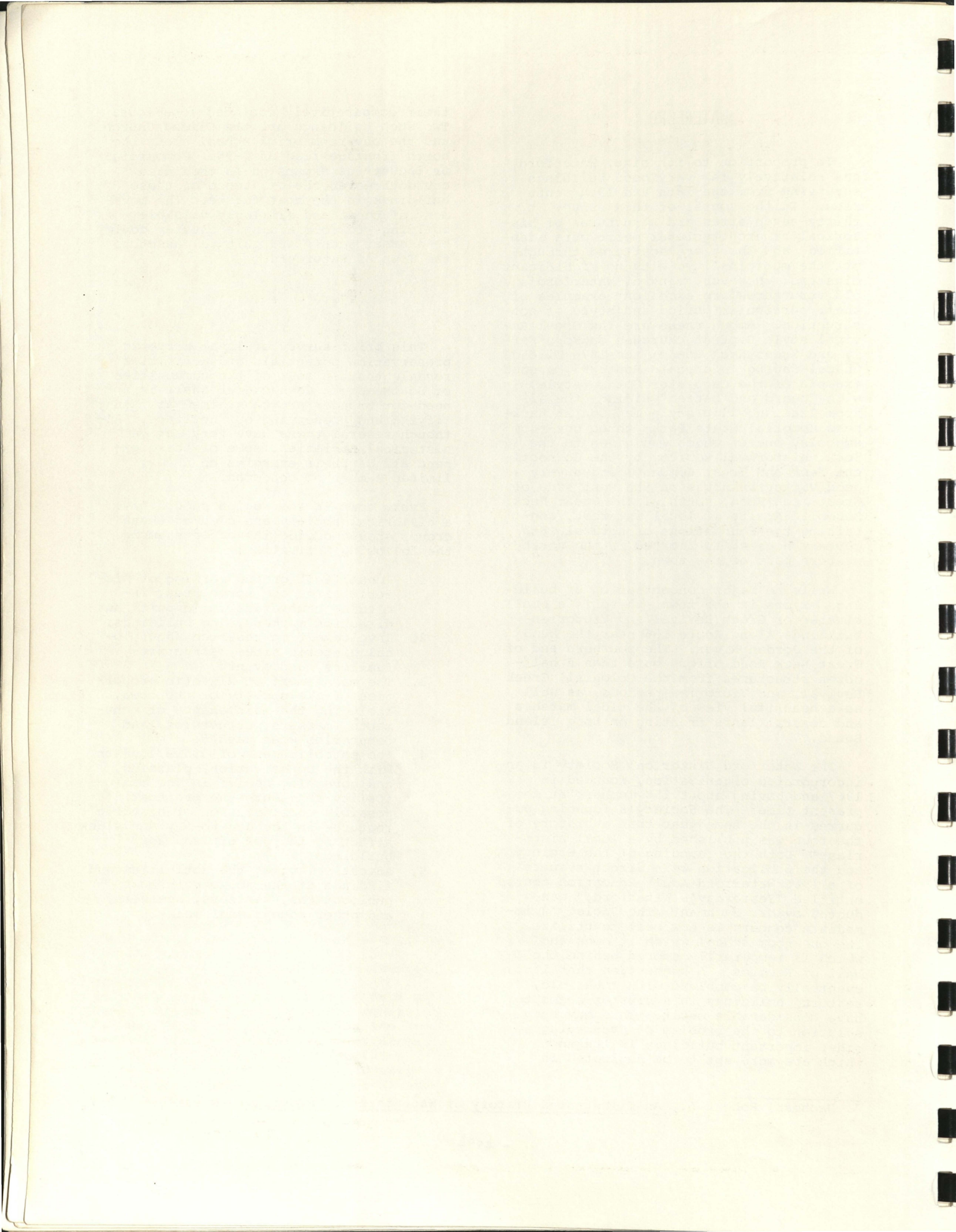


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FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

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SCALE IN MILES





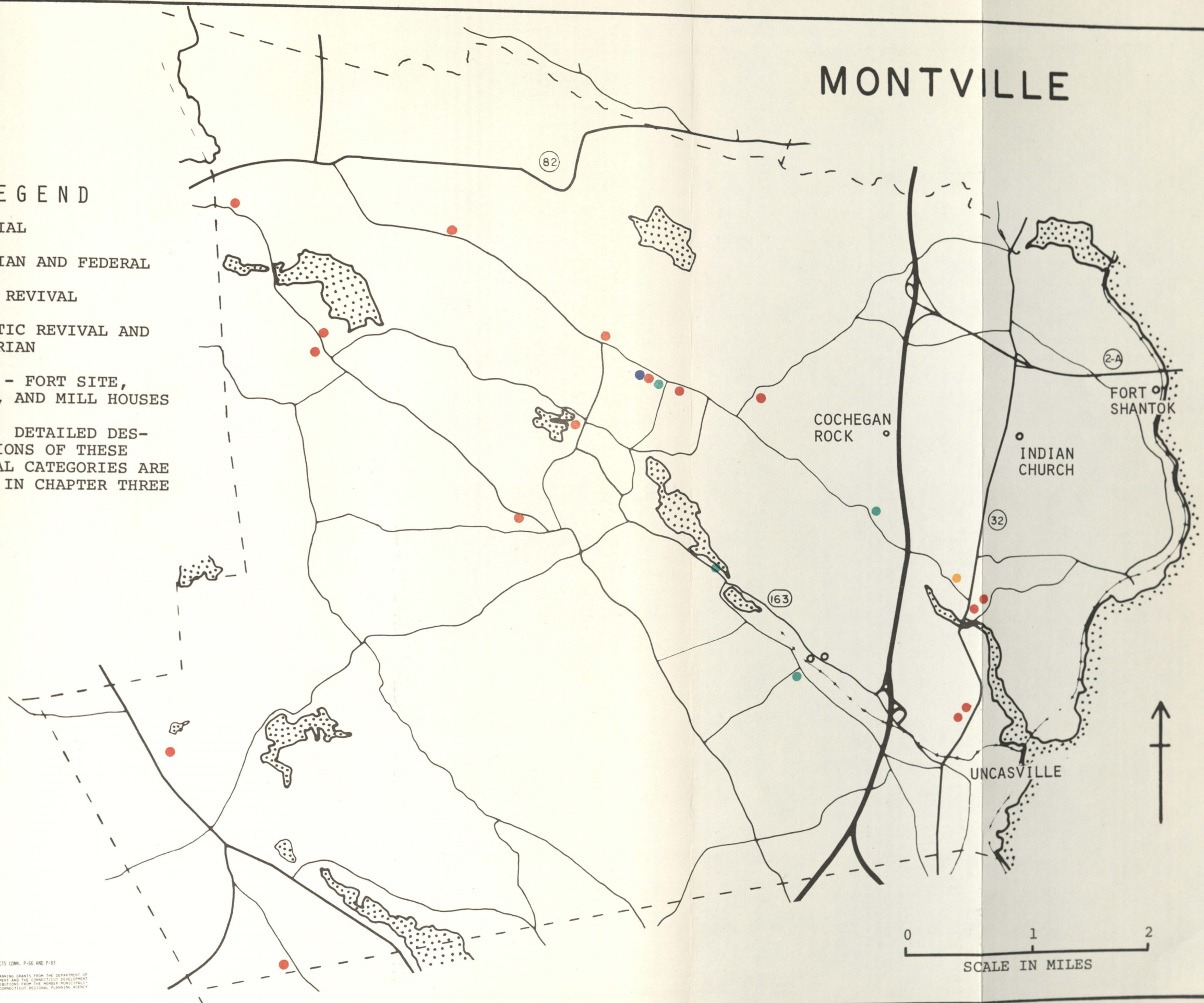


# MONTVILLE

## LEGEND

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- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - FORT SITE, MILLS, AND MILL HOUSES

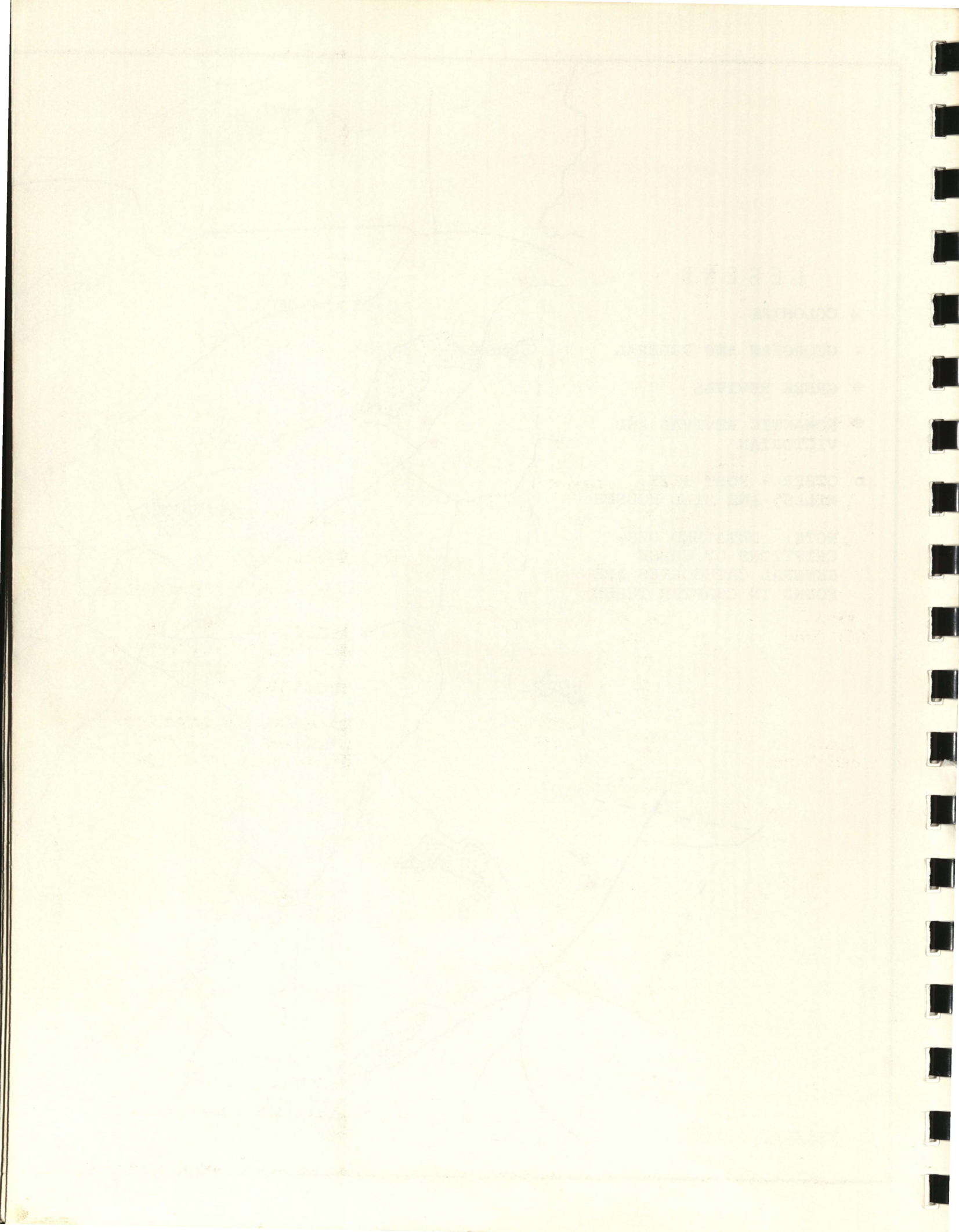
NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE



U.P.A. PROJECTS CONN. P-66 AND P-83

FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY







# NEW LONDON

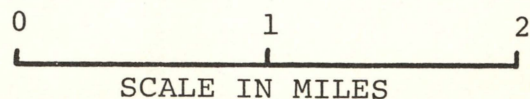
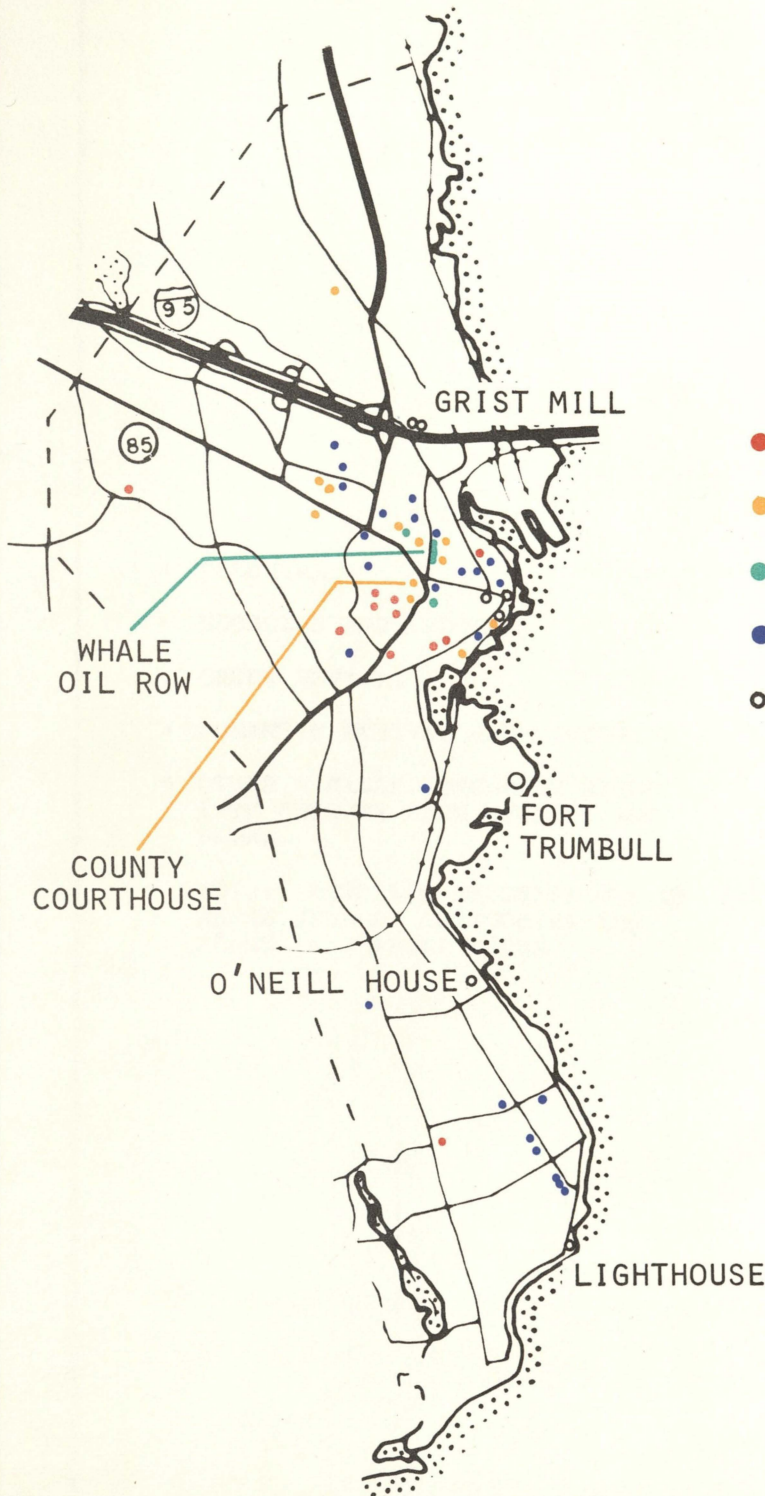
U.P.A. PROJECTS CONN. P-66 AND P-83

FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

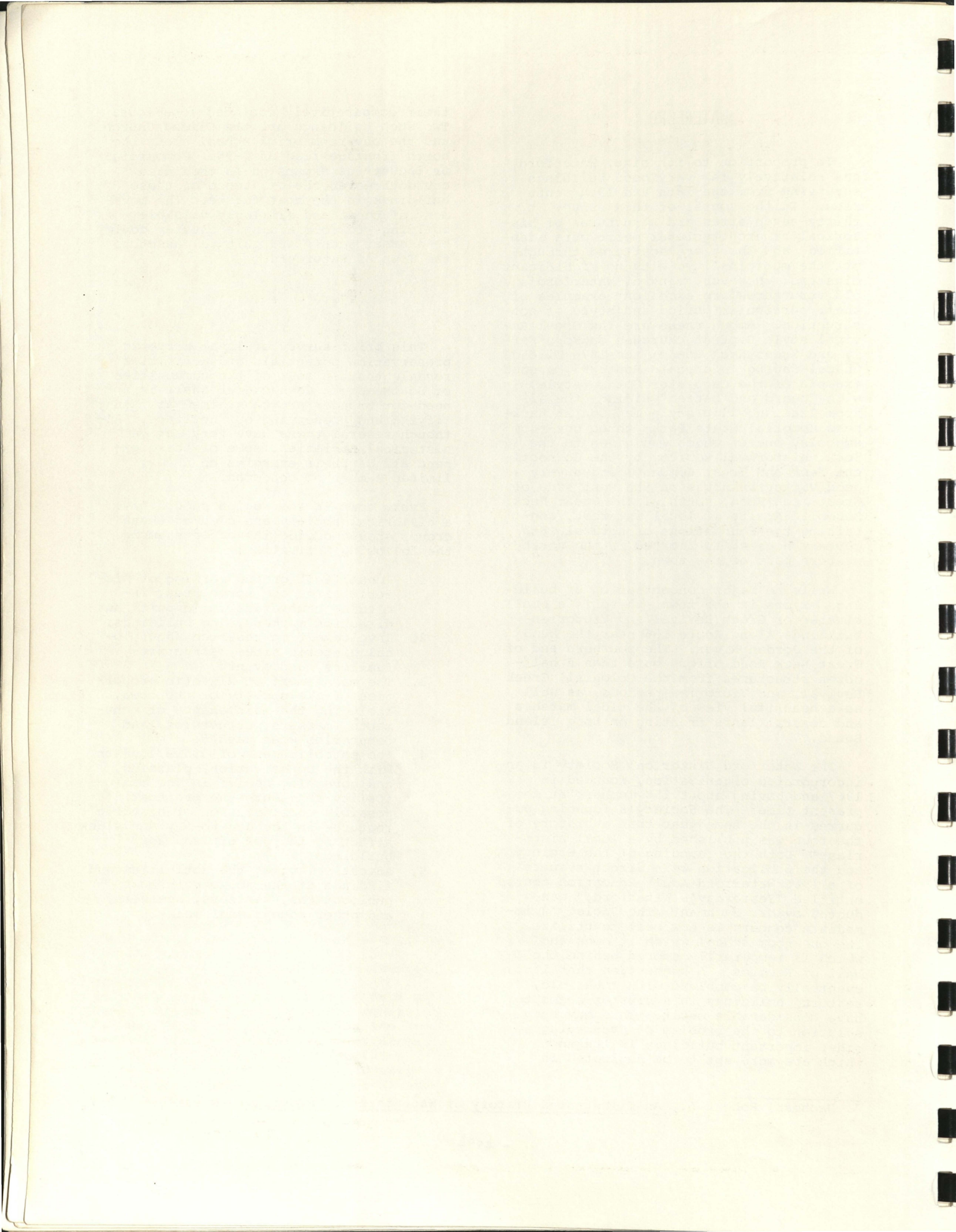
## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - FORTS, LIGHTHOUSES, MILLS, ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS, TRAIN STATION, AND 19TH CENTURY COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE









# NORTH STONINGTON

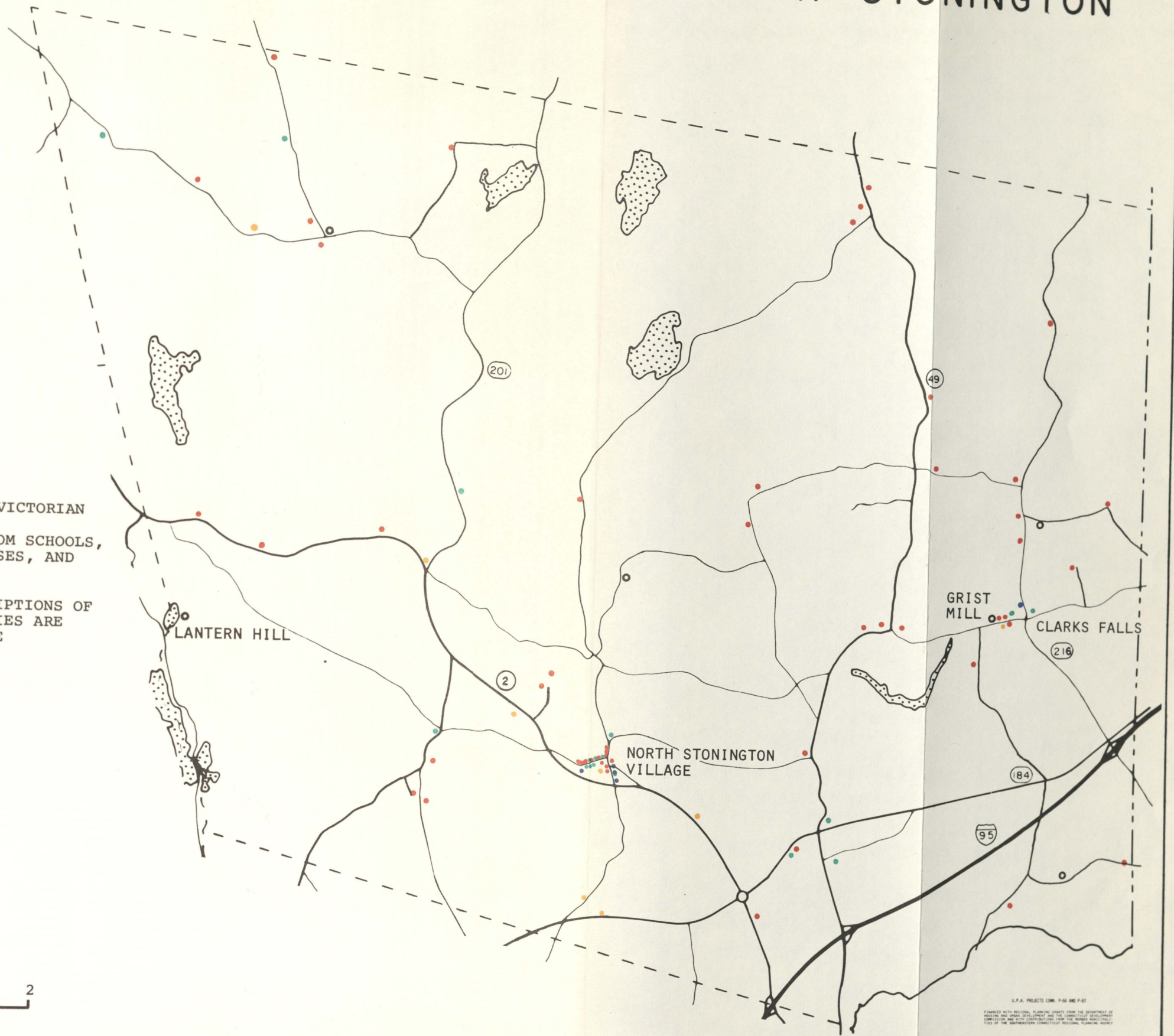
## LEGEND

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- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - MILLS, ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS, 19TH CENTURY FARM HOUSES, AND BARN

NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE

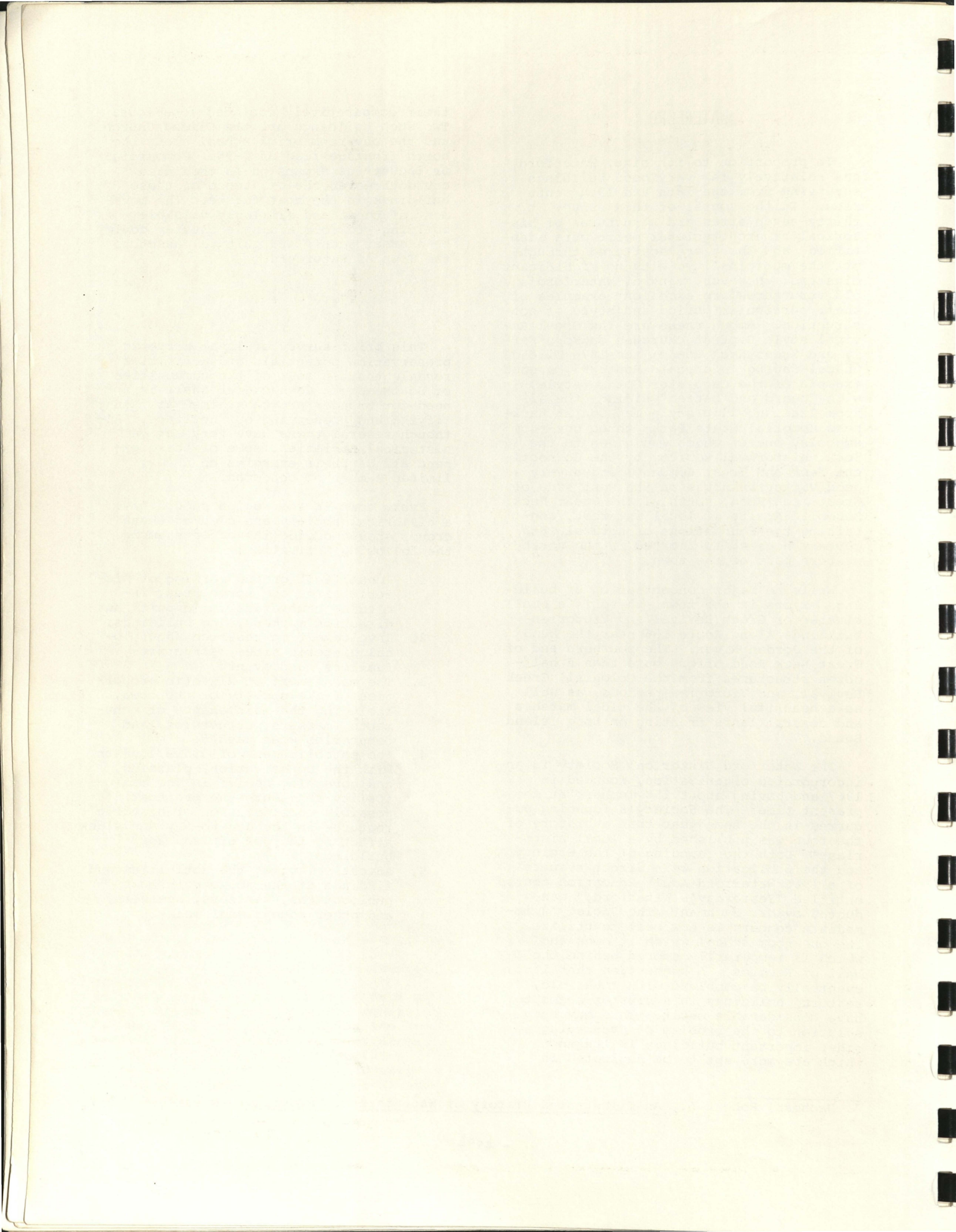


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SCALE IN MILES



U.S.A. PROJECTS COM. P-56 AND P-57  
FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND ALSO CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MEMBERS AND STAFF OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY





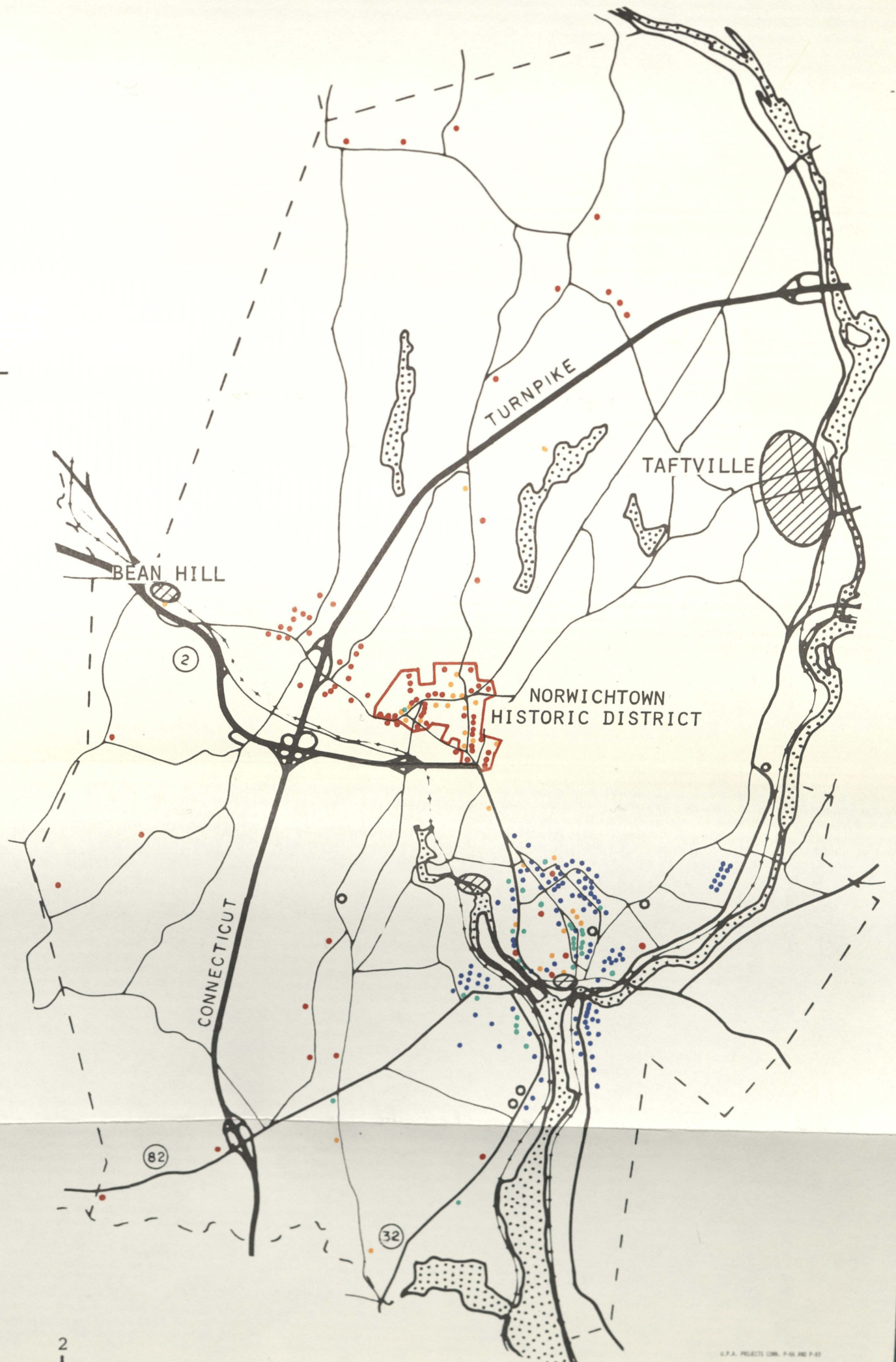


# NORWICH

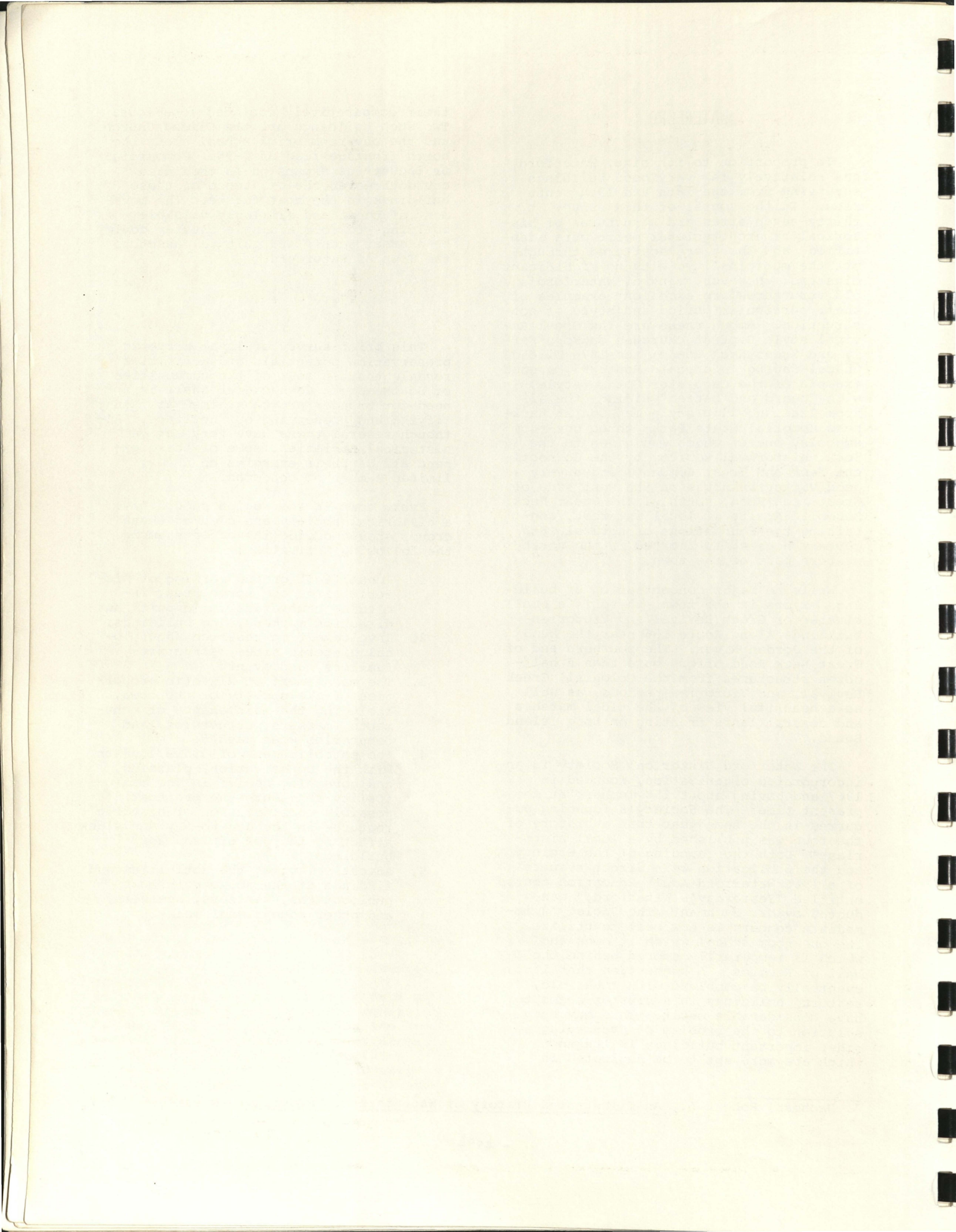
## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - MILLS, MILL HOUSES, ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS, GROUPINGS, AND 19TH CENTURY COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE

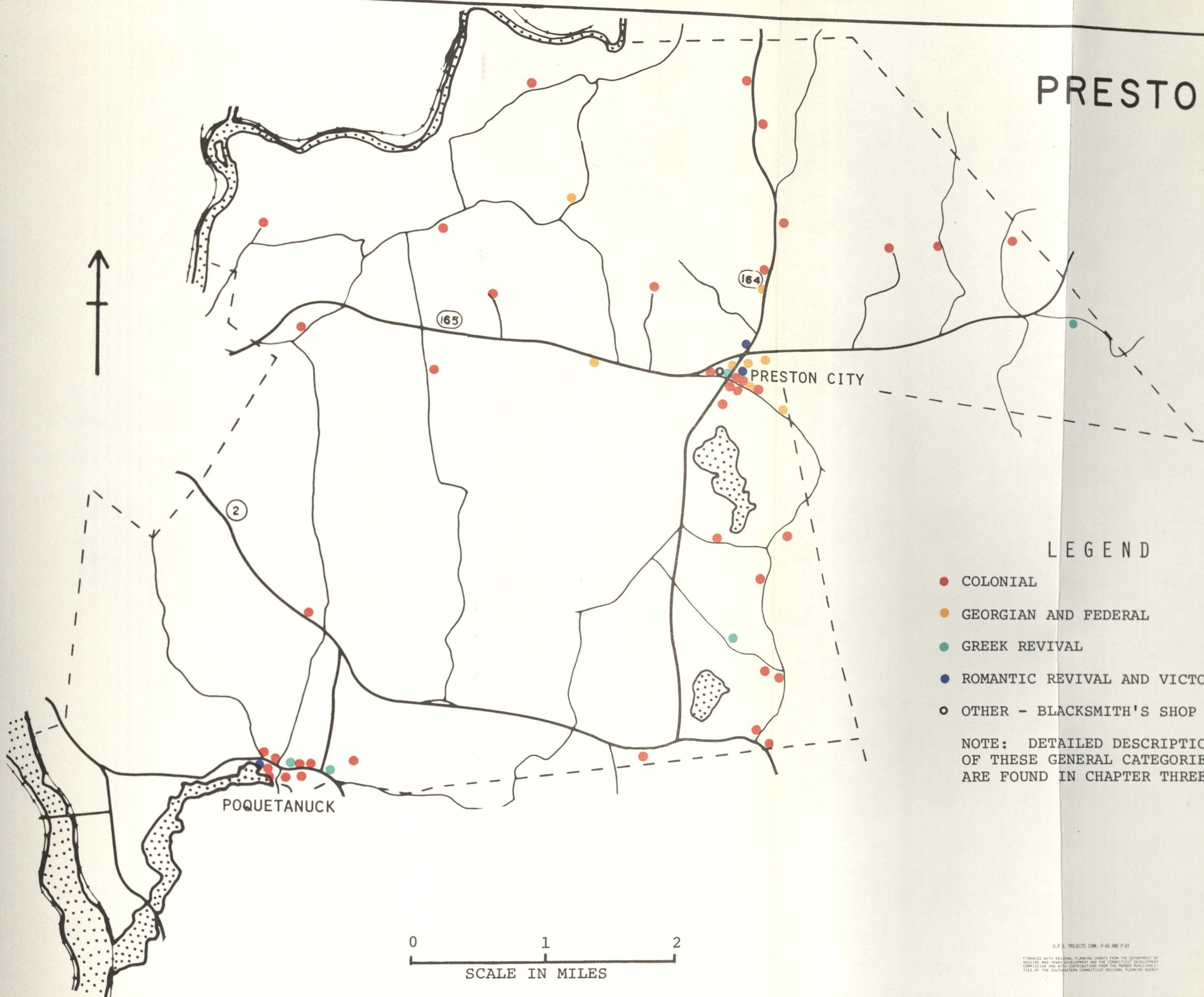








# PRESTON



## LEGEND

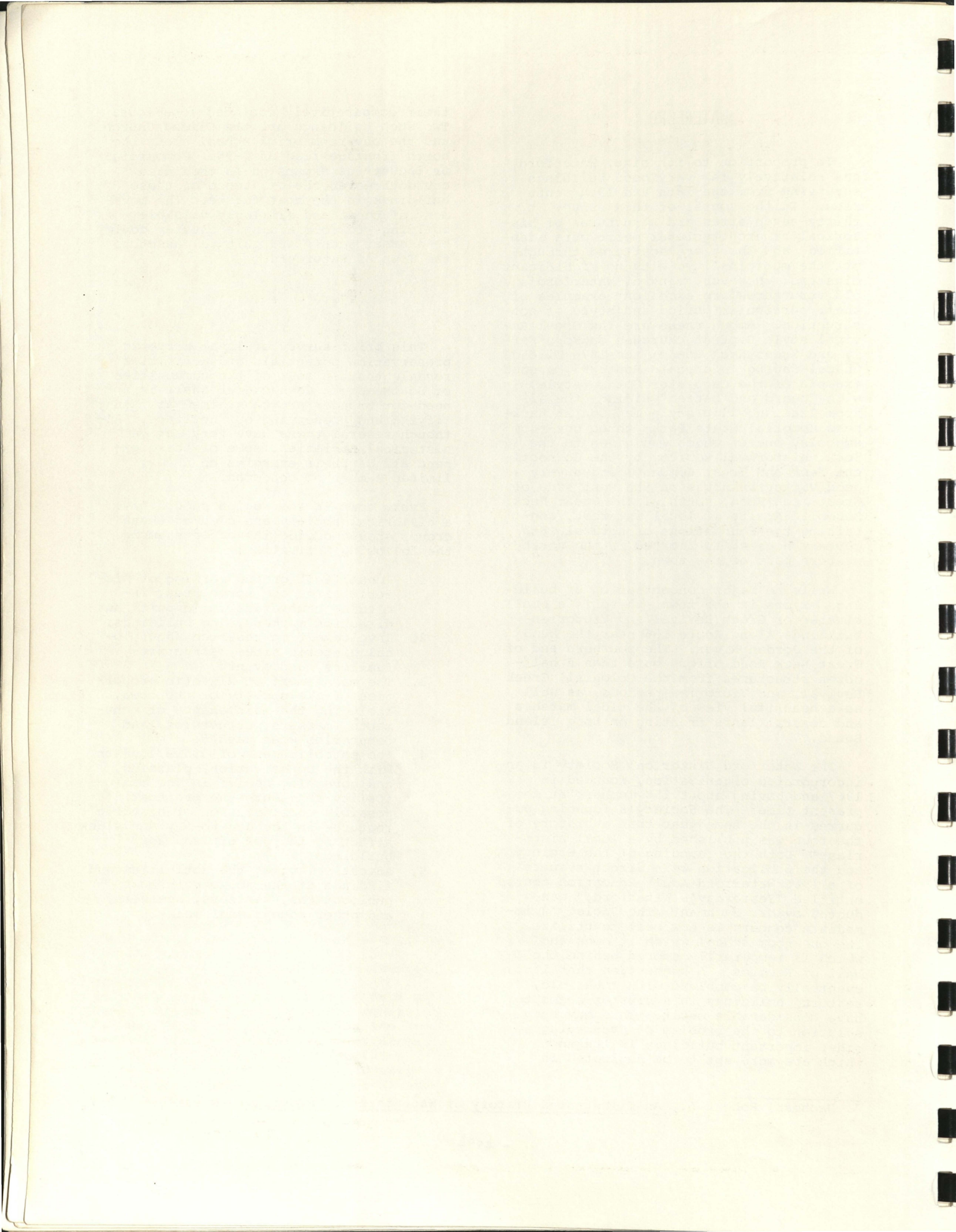
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- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - BLACKSMITH'S SHOP

NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS  
OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES  
ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE

U.P.R. PROJECTS CONN. P-66 AND P-85

FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF  
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MEMBER MUNICIPAL-  
ITIES OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY







# SALEM

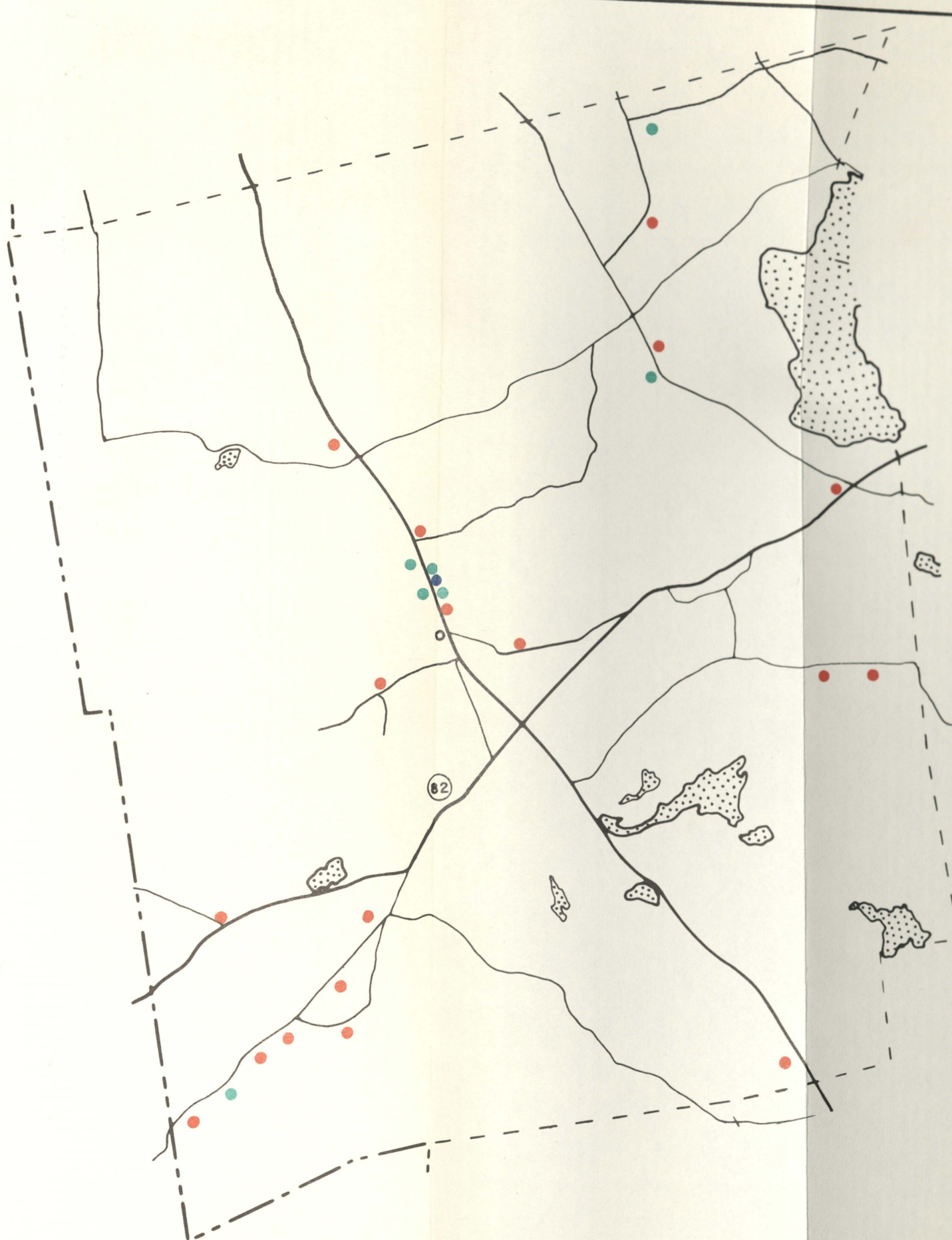
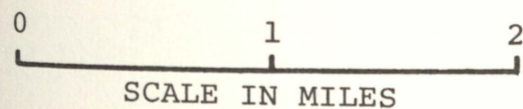
U.P.A. PROJECTS CONN. P-66 AND P-85

FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - SITE OF MUSIC VALE SEMINARY

NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE

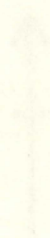




# SALEM

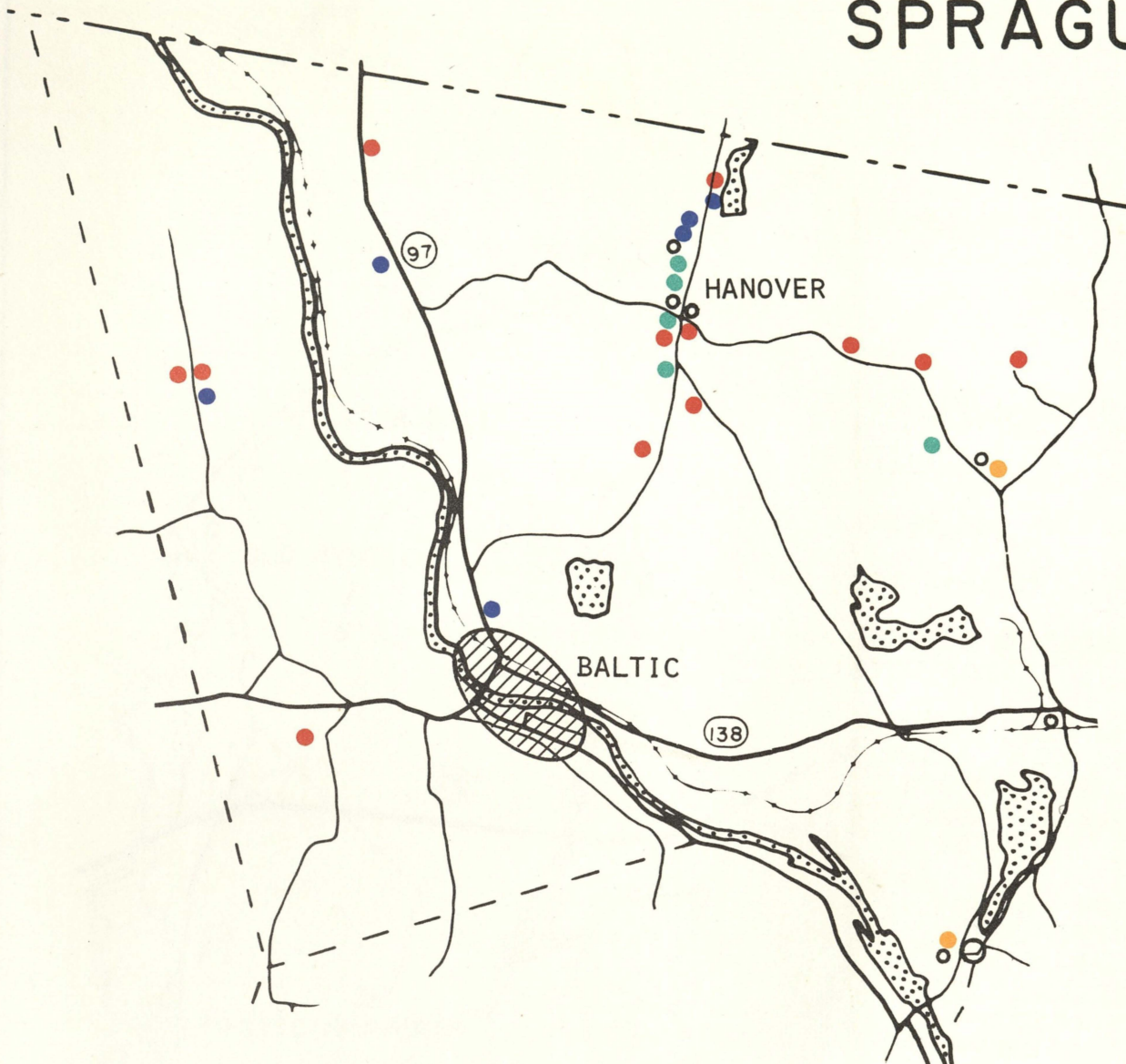
## LEGEND

- CONCRETE
  - CREEK BRIDGE
  - RAILROAD BRIDGE AND VESTIBULE
  - OTHER - SITE OF BRIDGE WALL
  - REMAINS
- NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF  
THESE BRIDGE COMPONENTS ARE  
GIVEN IN CHAPTER THREE





# SPRAGUE



## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - MILLS, MILL HOUSES, STONE HOUSES, TRAIN STATIONS, GROUPINGS, 19TH CENTURY FARM HOUSES, AND BARN

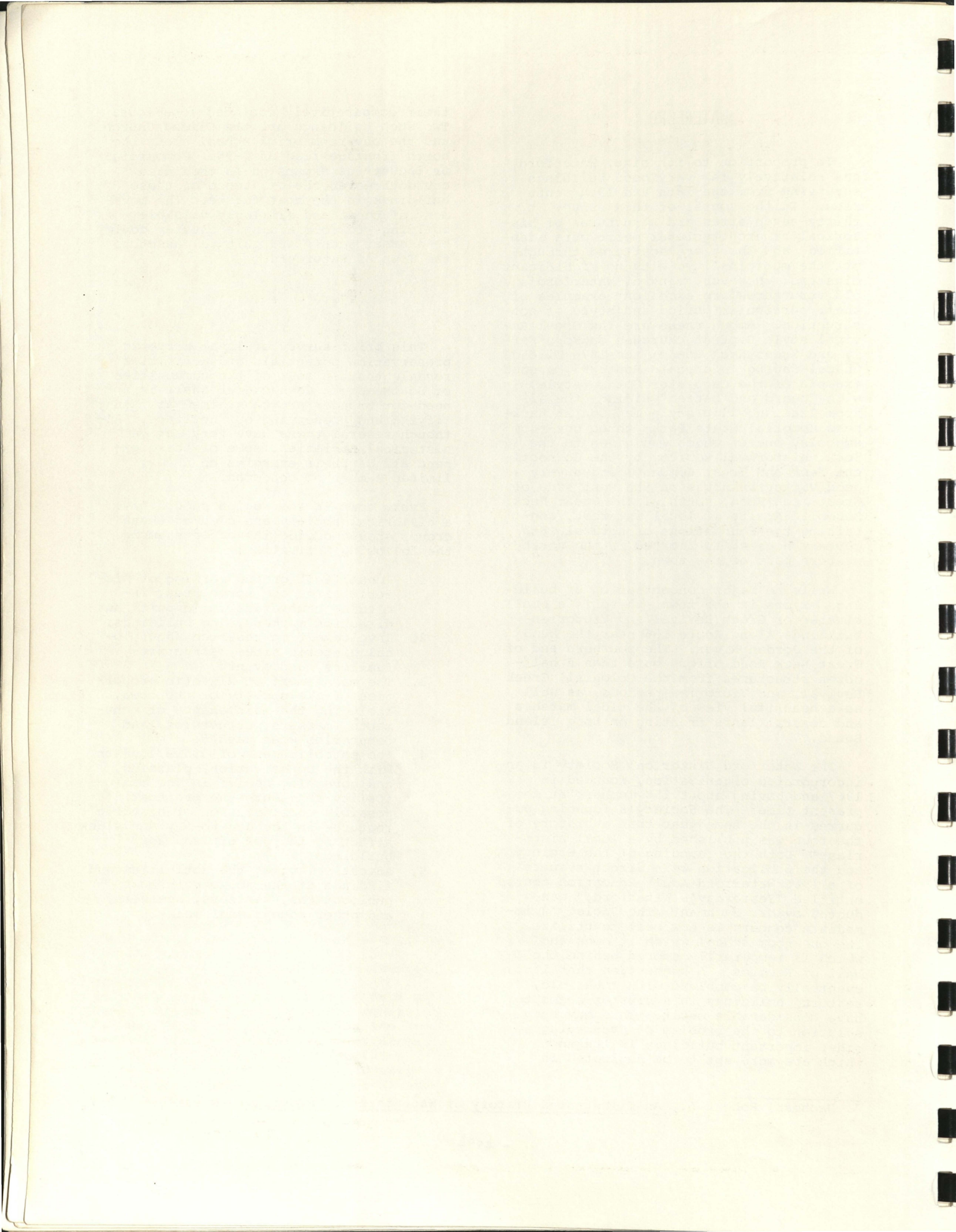
NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE

U.P.A. PROJECTS CONN. P-66 AND P-83

FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

0 1 2  
SCALE IN MILES







# STONINGTON

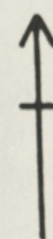
U.S.A. PROJECTS COM. P-66 AND P-67

FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE HARTFORD AREA OFFICE OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

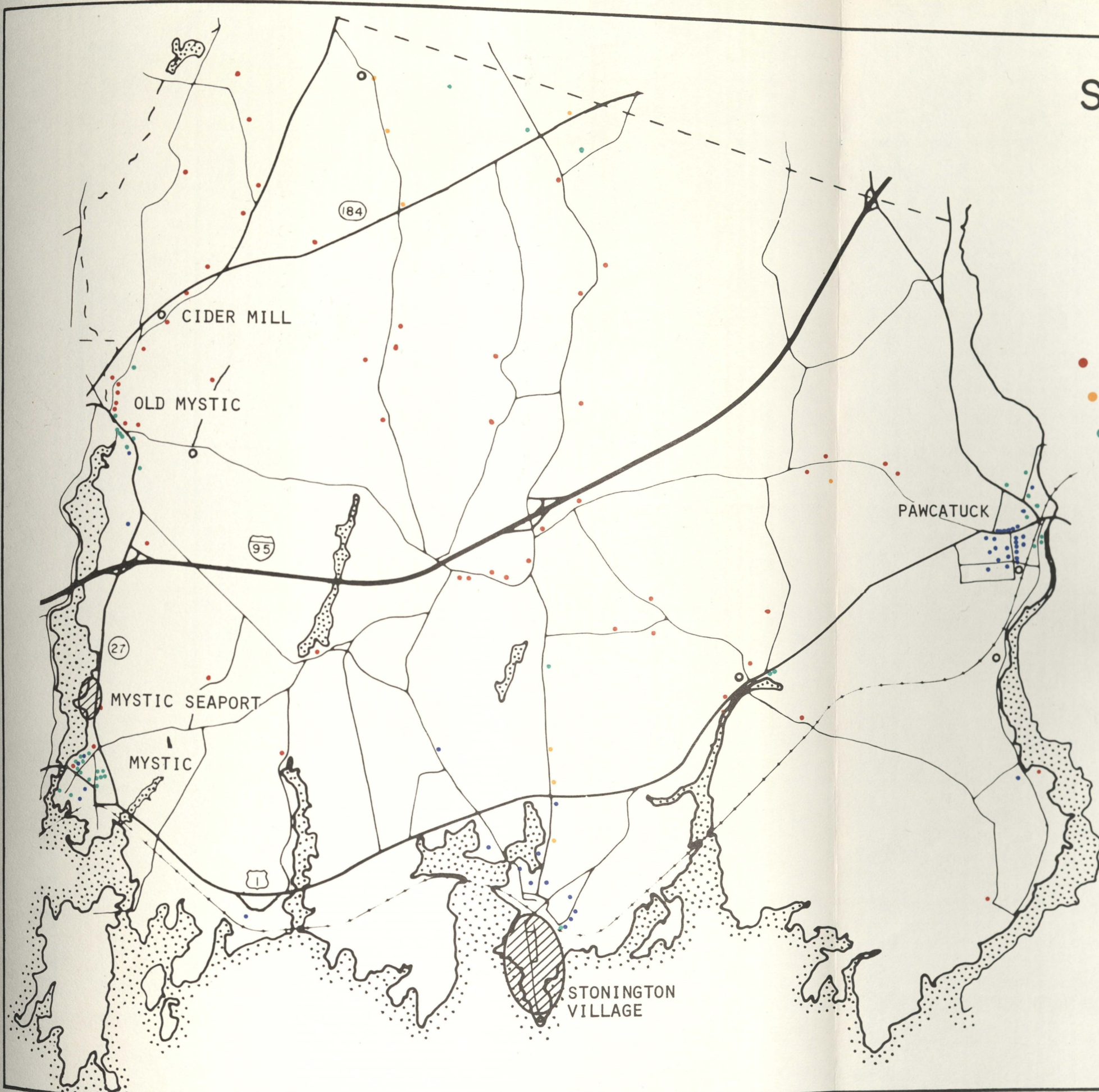
## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - LIGHTHOUSES, MILLS, MILL HOUSES, STONE HOUSES, GROUPINGS, BARNES, AND RUINS

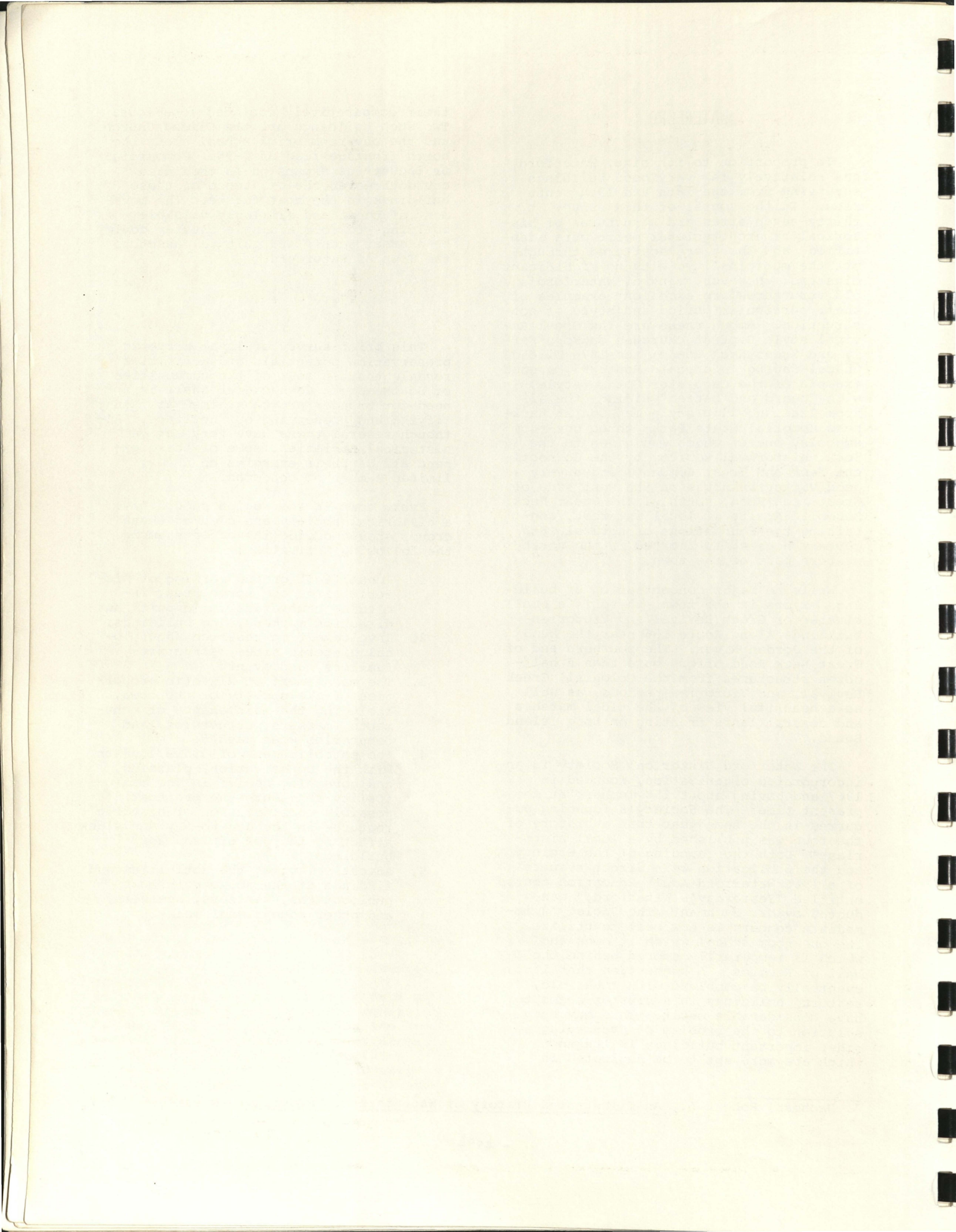
NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE



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SCALE IN MILES









# VOLUNTOWN

U.P.A. PROJECTS CONN. P-66 AND P-83  
FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF  
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MEMBER MUNICIPALI-  
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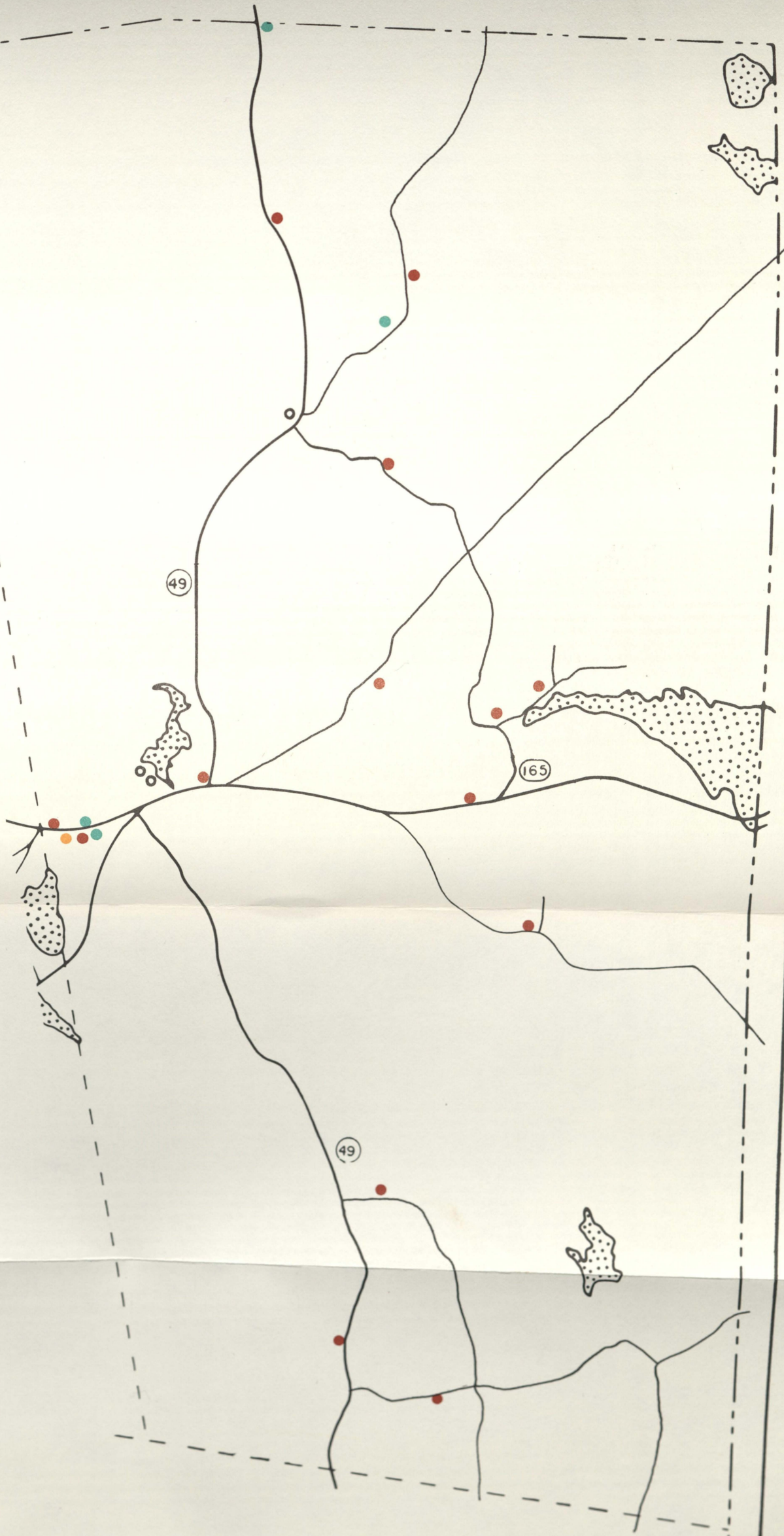
## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- OTHER - MILL HOUSES,  
AND ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS

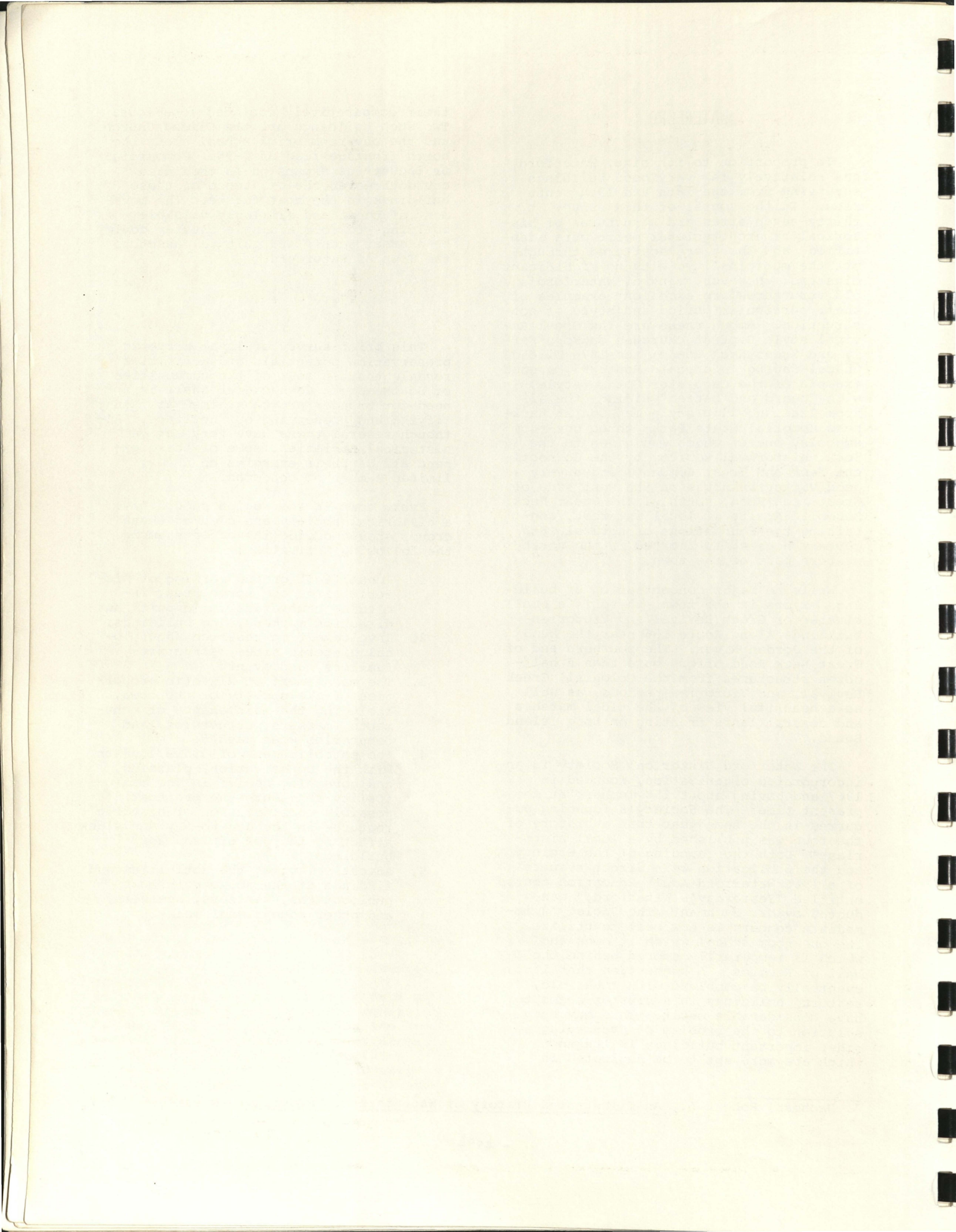
NOTE: DETAILED DES-  
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FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE



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SCALE IN MILES

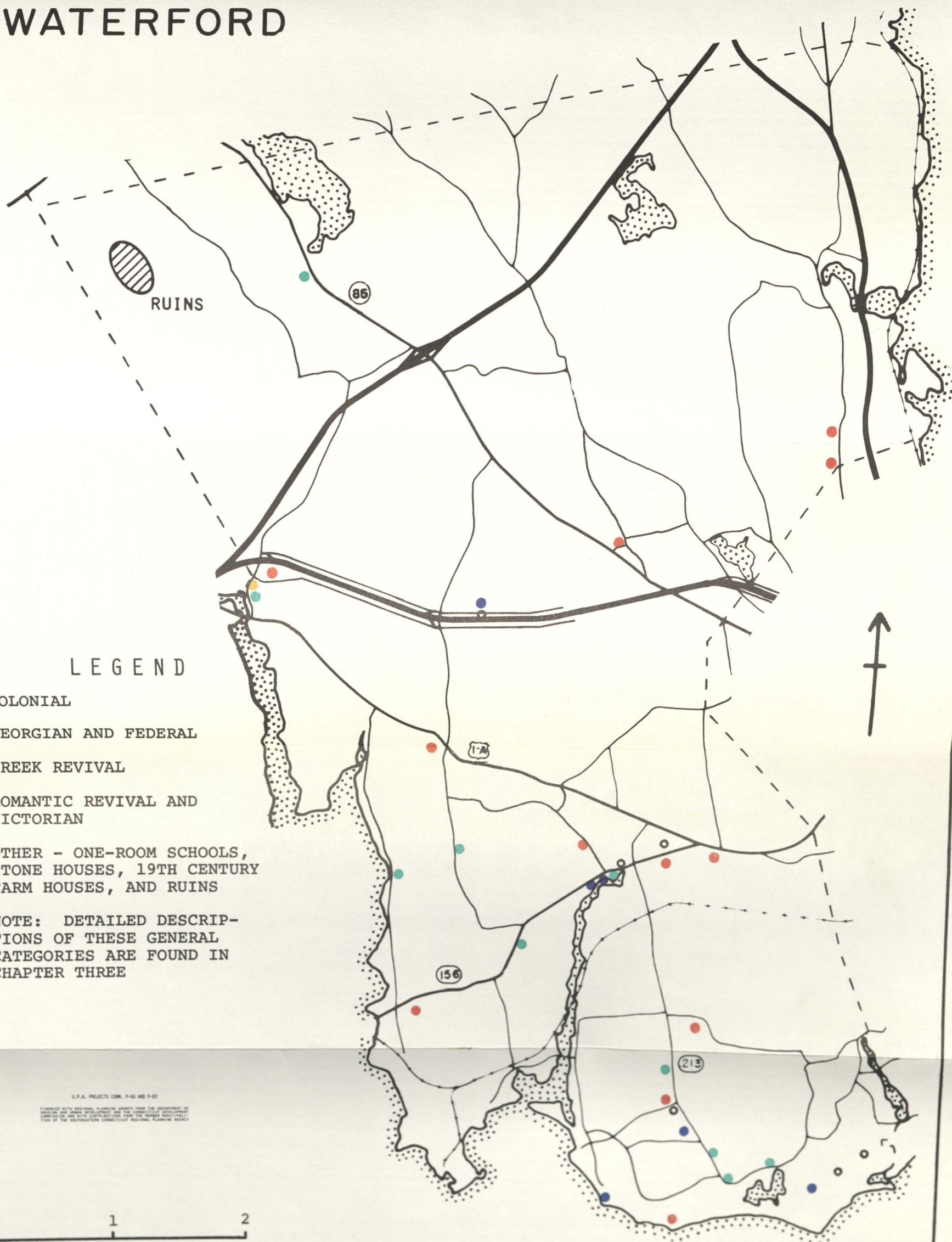








# WATERFORD



## LEGEND

- COLONIAL
- GEORGIAN AND FEDERAL
- GREEK REVIVAL
- ROMANTIC REVIVAL AND VICTORIAN
- OTHER - ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS, STONE HOUSES, 19TH CENTURY FARM HOUSES, AND RUINS

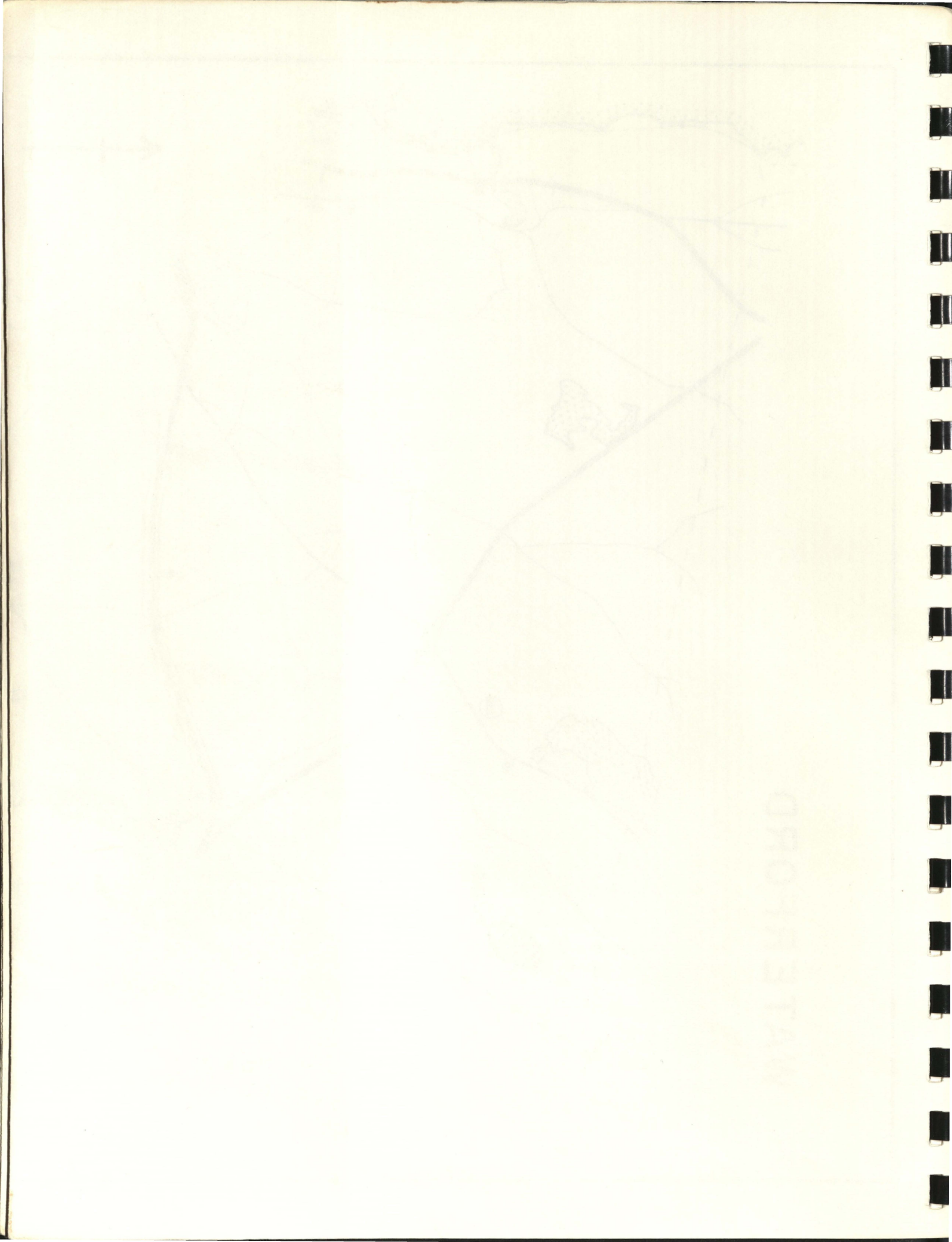
NOTE: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THESE GENERAL CATEGORIES ARE FOUND IN CHAPTER THREE

U.P.A. PROJECTS COM. P-66 AND P-67

FINANCED WITH REGIONAL PLANNING GRANTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONNECTICUT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AND WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES OF THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

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SCALE IN MILES





PROHETA



## 6. AIDS TO PRESERVATION







## INTRODUCTION

The events that can lead to the gradual destruction of our heritage frequently go unnoticed. Those who value this heritage must constantly be alert to the subtle forces that can alter or destroy it. The charm of a village center can be rapidly eroded when adequate land use controls are shunned in favor of expanding the grand list. A variance here and a zone change there can lead with furtive speed to the complete desecration of an irreplaceable scene from the past.

The most important requirement of any preservation action is a concerned citizenry. When people are aware of and appreciate their heritage, they can do much to preserve it. Too frequently, however, we take for granted that which is left from the past and fail to recognize the need for preservation measures until a crisis situation develops. For example, the residents of a town that has numerous historic structures scattered throughout it, might not become interested in preservation measures until only a few of these treasures remain. The sites and structures that lend charm and character to a community can disappear rapidly.

Those concerned with historic preservation have a growing number of tools to assist them in their efforts. These tools are in the form of public and private action groups, preservation techniques, and financial assistance programs. In the following pages we discuss methods of preservation that are, or could be, used to good advantage here in Southeastern Connecticut.

## EXISTING PROGRAMS

### FEDERAL AID PROGRAMS

Foremost among the federal programs that can assist historic preservation projects is one administered by the Department of Interior. Under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the Department may make grants to states, municipalities, and the National Trust amounting to 50% of the costs of "protection, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, or culture." Connecticut municipalities are presently unable to participate in this program because a prerequisite to receiving grants is a state-wide historic preservation

plan, which has not yet been completed by the State Historical Commission. Local projects must be in accord with the state-wide plan to be eligible for grants. Federal aid under this program is not likely to make a major impact on preservation financing in the future except where preservation projects of state-wide significance are concerned.

The state-wide plan referred to above will be based on an inventory of places having national, state, and local significance. This inventory will in turn become a part of an expanded National Register of historically and architecturally important buildings and sites from throughout the country. The Register will give local, state, and federal officials and agencies a master list of significant properties which can be referred to whenever major construction or reconstruction projects are contemplated.

The 1966 Act also establishes a 17-member National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Among other duties, the Council will serve as a forum for resolving conflicts between preservationists and other interests.

Another source of federal aid is the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This Department may give grants of up to 50% for the acquisition, improvement, and restoration of sites and structures of historic or architectural value. A project which has "special value in developing and demonstrating new and improved methods and materials" for preservation may qualify for a 90% grant.

HUD funds are also available for up to two-thirds of the cost of local preservation surveys and programs to be done in conjunction with comprehensive planning for the municipality and to identify and preserve historic sites and structures in urban renewal areas. Grants may also be obtained to assist in the purchase of undeveloped property that will preserve or display a historic property. The purchase of less-than-fee interest in property for historic preservation is encouraged by both HUD and the Department of Interior. The Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-448) makes grants available to municipalities for detailed study of individual historic structures to determine rehabilitation or restoration costs. This goes well beyond the previously mentioned HUD grant programs that permitted only general surveys. Municipalities may now receive aid for cost analysis studies of specific preservation projects.

Although it has no grant program, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)



is required by law to respect the efforts of the historic preservationist. Federal law requires that land used for historic preservation purposes may not be infringed upon for federally-aided highway construction unless no feasible alternative is available. Every effort must be made by the Department to minimize the adverse effects of transportation facilities on historic properties.

Historic preservation may also be accomplished through HUD-financed urban renewal projects. In recent years there has been a shift from complete clearance to the conservation-rehabilitation of deteriorating urban areas. This provides a new lease on life for many urban structures that might otherwise be destroyed through neglect or demolition. This approach to preservation has particular application in Groton, New London, and Norwich. In all of these municipalities there are architecturally significant buildings in areas where renewal is likely to take place eventually.

The rehabilitation of historic structures, together with the compatible design of new buildings, can do much to retain the character and atmosphere that has marked the urban centers of this region for many years.

#### THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

This non-governmental organization was chartered by Congress in 1949 "to facilitate public participation in the preservation of sites, buildings, and objects of national significance or interest by providing a national trust for historic preservation."

The Trust owns and administers six properties and until recently has depended on contributions, membership fees and bequests for working capital. The major activities of the Trust include periodic professional conferences, summer institutes and annual meetings in various cities, but the primary function is that of a clearing house in the field of historic preservation. The Trust publishes article reprints, monographs on historic zoning and architectural controls, criteria for evaluating historic sites and buildings and other materials, as well as offering direct services to member organizations in the form of lecturers, architectural historians and legal specialists.

With a membership of over 3,500, the Trust has not been able to help every community that has asked for assistance. However, some expansion of Trust activities is likely to occur as a result of

Public Law 89-665, which authorizes direct matching grants to the Trust from the Department of Interior. Preservation projects involving the Trust need not be entirely in accord with state preservation plans. Once again, however, limited financing will minimize the effect of the National Trust's preservation activities at the local level.

The Trust also publishes a quarterly magazine entitled "Historic Preservation" and a monthly newspaper, "Preservation News." Both of these publications contain articles about the goals, accomplishments and failures, and potentials and frustrations of American preservationists.

#### STATE PROGRAMS

The State Historical Commission. The high purposes and great potentials of this important agency are in sharp contrast with its low budget and small administrative staff. Although it is responsible under the provisions of Public Act 521 for preparing a statewide historic preservation plan and for administering both the state and the U.S. Department of Interior preservation grant programs in Connecticut, the Commission has operated out of inadequate quarters and with insufficient staff personnel. As a result, the inventory for the statewide preservation plan varies widely from town to town in quality and emphasis, and a final plan is not likely to be a reality for many more months. As previously stated, this situation makes Connecticut towns and historical organizations ineligible to receive preservation grants from the Department of the Interior, since a prerequisite to grants from this source is a statewide plan for historic preservation.

The Historical Commission received an appropriation of \$750,000 from the 1967 session of the General Assembly for state acquisitions and matching grants to local public and private groups. Consequently, only limited financial aid for preservation projects is available from this source. Within its small budget, the Commission may make grants not exceeding 50% of the non-federal share of costs for acquisition, relocation, and restoration of landmarks and structures identified in the Commission's historical inventory. (Information regarding eligibility for state grants can be obtained from the State Historical Commission, 75 Elm Street, Hartford, Connecticut.)

In addition to its financial aid program, the Historical Commission can give valuable advice regarding historic preservation methods and procedures. The



Commission can suggest architects and craftsmen who are capable of achieving quality restorations and reconstructions. Local groups should contact the Commission's staff prior to commencing any preservation project to insure that the project is eligible for a grant if and when it is sought.

#### The State Park and Forest Commission.

In addition to providing and maintaining major recreation areas and forests in Connecticut, this Commission is responsible for numerous historic sites and structures. In this region significant features under the control of the Park and Forest Commission include Fort Griswold and the nearby monument and museum in Groton, the mansion and grounds at Harkness Memorial State Park in Waterford, and the Indian fort and burial grounds at Fort Shantok in Montville.

Properties held by the Park and Forest Commission are usually well maintained and managed. A serious exception to this rule is Fort Griswold. This important relic from the Revolutionary War was the scene of the 1781 massacre of Colonel William Ledyard and many of his outnumbered command after they had surrendered to British troops under the command of the infamous Benedict Arnold. Although much of the fort has survived over the years, the earthworks and trenches have been allowed to cave in and become overgrown with weeds and vines. Instead of restoring and enhancing this historic site, the Commission has done little in recent years other than to mow the grass in the main compound and around the nearby monument. The 1967 session of the General Assembly appropriated \$10,000 for a restoration study of the Fort, but to date no such study has been completed. Certainly, this project deserves a higher priority than it has enjoyed to date.

#### LOCAL PROGRAMS

The local historical societies are responsible for a major share of the preservation work that has been done to date in Southeastern Connecticut. As was shown in the previous chapter, these groups own and maintain several important structures, and they play an equally significant role as researchers of the history of local families and properties. Over the years these investigations form the raw material for informative and useful chronologies. Structural descriptions of today, for example, can assure more authentic restorations in the future. The recording of local legends and minor historical events provides a legacy of local color or interest to subsequent generations.

Local societies can be effective spearheads for action where historic buildings or sites are threatened by public development or redevelopment projects. Local officials insensitive to the objectives of historic preservationists are usually impressed by an aroused citizenry, but all too often a good structure has to be threatened to arouse support for its preservation. On the other hand, municipal officials aware of and interested in retaining their local heritage can achieve much by enlisting the support and cooperation of the local historical society.

Although Southeastern Connecticut presently has 13 local historical societies, six towns have no such organizations. These are Bozrah, Griswold, Montville, Salem, Sprague, and Voluntown. Interested officials in these towns should encourage the formation of historical societies for the cultural and spiritual benefit of present and future generations. Assistance for organizing societies is available from SCRPA, other local societies within the region, and the Connecticut League of Historical Societies. Once organized and in operation, a continuing exchange of ideas with other societies can be mutually beneficial.

A major step toward eventual coordination of local preservation efforts has been taken by the Chamber of Commerce of Southeastern Connecticut in the formation of a Heritage Committee. The Committee is made up of representatives from historical societies throughout the region and its purpose is to promote the outstanding historic attractions throughout the region that are open to the public. To this end the Committee prepared an attractive brochure and map of forty of the region's famous buildings and sites. The costs of this publication were shared by the member organizations and the Chamber. The Committee also has agreed upon a uniform marker design with which to identify important sites and buildings. The local societies decide which sites are to be marked in their respective towns and the Chamber provides the markers. Again, costs are shared by the local society and the Chamber.

#### OTHER PRIVATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION GROUPS

The relatively small federal and state appropriations are not likely to make a significant impact on historic preservation activities in Connecticut in the foreseeable future. The bulk of the historic preservation efforts at the local level will continue to result from private initiative and financial sponsorship for many years to come.



Several private historical organizations exist that can provide assistance to local groups. Others own and operate buildings and sites in Southeastern Connecticut or other parts of New England, and advice and guidance from their members can be of considerable assistance to local groups.

The Connecticut League of Historical Societies consists of representatives from local historical societies throughout Connecticut, with each society contributing fifteen dollars for its membership privileges. Quarterly meetings are held to inform members of preservation activities, techniques and assistance. Members can benefit from the experience and specialized knowledge of others in attendance. Periodic workshops are sponsored by the League to advance the effectiveness of local societies, and a regular newsletter is distributed to the membership. (For more information, write to Mr. Dwight C. Lyman, 10 Hall Avenue, New London, Connecticut, 06320.)

The American Association for State and Local History serves individuals and organizations throughout the country who are interested in local history. Membership is on an individual basis, and a minimum contribution of five dollars brings considerable benefits. The Association publishes a monthly magazine, which includes news of current events in the field of state and local history, listings of available audio-visual materials, and information about federal legislation affecting historical societies. Members also receive periodic technical papers and bulletins covering a broad range of historical interests and are made aware of many other helpful publications published by other concerns. The Association also sponsors research on local history, provides awards for outstanding historical activities, and conducts occasional conferences and meetings throughout the country. (For more information write to the American Association for State and Local History, 132 Ninth Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37203.)

The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities owns and maintains more than fifty structures throughout New England that were built between the mid-17th and early 19th centuries. The Society has practiced many legal techniques in its preservation activities and has done much research into early design, furnishings, and building techniques. Currently, the Society owns no properties in this region, although it played a significant role in the restoration of Lef-fingwell Inn in Norwich.

Other organizations with property

interests in Southeastern Connecticut include the Daughters of the American Revolution, who own the Rockwell House and the Nathaniel Backus House in Norwich, and the Connecticut Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, which owns the Nathan Hale Schoolhouse in New London. One of the four homes owned and operated by the Antiquarians and Landmarks Society, Inc., of Connecticut is the Hempstead House in New London. All of these organizations have expended large sums of money on restoration projects of great importance to the residents of this region. The experience gained in these projects can be an inspiration and a useful guide to other preservation groups.

## PRESERVATION METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

The means by which a historic feature is preserved depends upon many factors. The following is a discussion of preservation procedures that should be considered for use by preservationists in this region.

Outright ownership is a method of preservation used by both public and private groups, and, on the surface, it seems to be the least complicated and surest way to preserve a building or site. Undoubtedly it gives the purchasing group considerable leeway with regard to the disposition of the property. However, ownership alone is not preservation. To preserve means to repair and maintain and this costs money - lots of it. Consequently, outright purchase of property for preservation purposes is not recommended unless sufficient resources are available or other arrangements made for subsequent operation and maintenance. Some of the most outstanding private historic preservation groups own very few properties. Their primary activity may be concerned with educating others to the needs and methods of preservation. The National Trust for Historic Preservation owns only six historic properties, scattered widely throughout the country. The reason for this is largely financial. The Trust, like many other preservation groups, will purchase a property or accept it as a gift only if there is sufficient endowment to properly maintain and operate the property. The costs of restoring and maintaining an old building can quickly exceed its purchase price.

There are many variations to the outright ownership theme. Many of these have been developed and used successfully by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. Most of the



Society's residential properties are lived in by Society members who, under the terms of a contract, contribute to the repairs and maintenance of the property and open parts of it to the public at various times.

Another approach, which has also been used successfully in this region, is to lease property owned by historic preservation groups for residential, governmental, or commercial purposes. For example, an 18th century silversmith's shop in Norwichtown has been used for many years as the office of a local architect under a lease arrangement with the owners, the Society of the Founders of Norwich.

State and local governments are also responsible for some important preservation techniques in Southeastern Connecticut. The New London County Courthouse in New London, actively used by the courts, is perhaps the best example of this in the region, although by no means the only one. A danger inherent in this approach to preservation is the possible lack of appropriations when major repairs are needed. In such instances a concerned citizenry is the most effective assurance that properties in this category are properly preserved.

Other techniques that have aided historic preservation include restrictive covenants on properties bought and subsequently sold by preservation groups. Under such arrangements, a group that wishes to preserve a structure but finds it inconvenient to continue the ownership may sell the property and include certain restrictions and limitations in the deed to assure its preservation.

The above methods of preservation involve outright ownership in one way or another. However, there are methods of preservation which necessitate only partial ownership, or the purchase of easements.<sup>\*</sup> Under this method, a property owner is compensated for giving up certain rights pertaining to his property. For example, he may be paid to retain a certain architectural style in the exterior appearance of his home. This method of preservation gives great flexibility to its users in that it can be applied over a broad geographical area and can be tailored to any specific situation. Historic sites and structures that are too widely scattered in a municipality to favor historic district zoning may be preserved in this manner.

The easement approach carries with it certain limitations and dangers. First, it costs money and the amounts will vary considerably, depending upon the nature of the easement and the interest of the property owner in historic preservation. In closely-knit preservation areas, involving more than one property owner, a single holdout can wreck an otherwise workable preservation project.

Second, easements can be very complex, and considerable legal skill is needed to draw up the individual contracts. Possible future preservation objectives in the area have to be considered as well as land use patterns and changing community and legal attitudes. All of these considerations and many more, will affect the terms of the easement contract.

Finally, easements could conceivably be "over used" by one preservation group to the detriment of other groups and programs. Where a program of widespread preservation easements is anticipated, considerable publicity should be given to the program and the agreement and support of all other interested public and private preservation groups in the area should be obtained.

Probably the best known and least used method of historic preservation is historic district zoning. To date, only one area in Southeastern Connecticut has been established as a historic district, that area being a part of the Norwichtown section of Norwich. Unlike most of the methods previously discussed, zoning is a public approach to preservation carried out under the terms of state enabling legislation. Historic district zoning is a useful means of controlling the exterior appearance of all structures within a given area. It can greatly assist in preserving an area's character and identity and avoids the problems of making agreements with individual landowners. Furthermore, the method is politically and judicially acceptable, and it involves no compensation for the rights given up by the property owners.

The procedures for establishing a historic district in Connecticut are spelled out in Chapter 97, Section 7-147 of the General Statutes. These procedures are summarized as follows:

1. The legislative body of the municipality appoints a 5-member study committee to prepare a report on the proposed district,

<sup>\*</sup> Much of this discussion about easements is based on an article by Robert E. Stipe, entitled, "Easements vs. Zoning: Preservation Tools." Historic Preservation, National Trust for Historic Preservation, April-June, 1968.



defining the area to be included and the significance of the features therein.

2. The study committee sends copies of its report to local commissions and the Connecticut Historical Commission for review and comment.
3. The study committee holds a public hearing on the proposed district. Prior to the hearing, each property owner in the proposed district receives a) a notice of the hearing, b) a map showing the boundaries of the proposed district, c) a copy or summary of the study committee's report, and d) a copy of the proposed local ordinance establishing the district.
4. The study committee reports to the legislative body within 60 days after the hearing.
5. The legislative body polls the property owners in the proposed district. At least 75% of the owners must favor the establishment of the district.
6. The legislative body votes to accept the study committee report and enacts the necessary ordinance establishing the district and a historic district commission.

The administration of the local historic district ordinance is left to the historic district commission. The five-member commission's responsibilities are generally as follows:

1. It is basically concerned with controlling the erection, reconstruction, restoration, alteration, and razing of buildings in the historic district.
2. The commission has to issue a certificate of appropriateness before the exterior architectural features of any building in the district may be changed, except that the commission may not regulate the color used on buildings and may not prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration, or demolition of any such feature which the building inspector or a similar agent certifies is required by the public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition. Neither may the com-

mission prevent the ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior feature in the historic district which does not involve a change in the design of that feature.

3. The commission must hold a public hearing for each certificate of appropriateness applied for.

Obviously, proper administration of historic district regulations can be time consuming and even costly, depending upon the details of the regulations. And herein lie the potential problems associated with historic district zoning. First, commission members must be competent to judge structural designs or they must retain professional assistance. Second, enforcement actions frequently involve legal fees. Both of the above may necessitate the expenditure of public funds. It is significant to note that the ordinance establishing our region's only historic district made no provisions for funding the commission's administration of the ordinance. Enforcement agencies in such situations are usually reluctant to seek advice beyond the confines of the commission and may be forced to make compromises rather than become involved in expensive court fights.

Finally, an informal method of preservation that has done much to save many historic structures from neglect and possible destruction is the generation of pride on the part of the property owner in the significance of his property. This can be accomplished in several ways. A local historical group may prepare markers for buildings of historical or architectural importance. Such a marker, attached to the house, may indicate only the style, age, and builder of the structure, with a note about its historical significance, if this is appropriate.

Pride of ownership is also generated by the occasional books that residents publish on the historical significance of homes in their town. The effect of such publications was dramatized in this area with the release in 1967 of a small book about Norwich homes.\* Within a few weeks more than a score of homes in the Norwichtown area, which was featured in the book, were painted or otherwise improved in appearance by their owners.

\* O'Keefe, Marion and Doroshevich, Catherine. Norwich Historic Homes and Families. Stonington, Connecticut, 1967.



7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION







Although Southeastern Connecticut has a vast wealth of important sites and structures from its historic past, there is no guarantee that these features will be available for future generations to enjoy. To the present time, preservation has depended largely upon individual pride and initiative. Only a relatively few sites and structures have been preserved as a result of organized public or private action. The following suggestions are made to accelerate and broaden the efforts now being made to preserve the region's rich heritage.

- To provide a sound basis for a systematic preservation effort in the region, each town should have a historical society with a town-wide outlook and program for historic preservation. In each municipality top priority should be given to the completion of a detailed historical inventory.

Such an inventory serves several purposes. First, it provides a record of buildings and sites existing at the time the inventory is made. As a warning device, subsequent inventories can be checked against this to keep account of the rate at which the number of historic structures may be decreasing (the number never increases). Second, a detailed inventory, along with historical research, may reveal facts or features of historical importance that warrant special attention or publicity. Third, a complete inventory enables local groups and officials to better evaluate priorities for preservation projects. Occasionally, too much effort is expended on one project while others of equal or greater significance are neglected entirely. Fourth, the local inventory provides an opportunity to ensure that both the state and the federal inventories, especially the National Register, include all that is important to the municipality. This will permit a better evaluation of the impact of future state and federally-aided projects on local historic preservation objectives. Finally, the inventory of historic sites and structures should be a major input into the municipality's comprehensive planning program. The design and location of streets and highways, public buildings, commercial areas, redevelopment projects, and open spaces can all have a marked effect on the chances for survival of important historical features.

- The importance of historic preservation consideration in the local planning process cannot be overstated. A local plan should be based in part on the aesthetic and cultural resources and goals of the community. Historic sites and structures in all of the towns of South-

eastern Connecticut are readily apparent features that add greatly to the visual and cultural richness of each community. If these amenities are to be retained, they certainly cannot be ignored during the planning process.

The local historical society should work closely with the planning commission in acquiring information on historic buildings and sites. Later, when planning proposals are made, the historical society should evaluate the proposals in terms of their beneficial or detrimental effects on historic features before any land use regulations implementing the plan are adopted.

- Historical societies throughout Southeastern Connecticut should carefully review zoning regulations in their respective municipalities to determine where threats to historic sites may occur. Generally, a historic structure in any commercial or industrial zone eventually is likely either to be demolished or surrounded by detrimental land uses on adjacent properties.

Improper zoning near a historic feature can be as harmful as such zoning of the historic property itself. A case in point is presently being contested in Norwich where a hamburger stand is proposed in a commercial zone within sight of the Norwichtown Green, which itself is protected by historic district zoning. Closer attention to the types of land uses permitted in this commercial zone might have effected an earlier change in the zoning, thus eliminating the need for the present controversy. Hardly a town in the region is not faced with similar threats.

The lack of zoning alone can be a serious threat to preservation. Without zoning there are no controls at all on land uses in any part of a municipality. All towns in Southeastern Connecticut should have zoning. Those presently lacking it are: Franklin, Griswold, Lisbon, Montville, and Voluntown.

- Expansion of the membership and activities of the Heritage Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of Southeastern Connecticut could serve the region in several ways. Needless to say, the combined efforts of representatives from all of the region's historic preservation groups should be able to achieve much more in the way of preservation and promotion than the groups can do on their own. The Heritage Committee can benefit the region by the following activities:

1. Continue the promotional program to acquaint the thousands of



people who visit the region each year with the great range of historic attractions existing throughout all of Southeastern Connecticut.

2. Arouse greater awareness of and interest in historic preservation among the region's residents and municipal officials.
3. Publicize known threats to historic features. Frequently, the forces which threaten one town are at work in others as well. The Committee could sponsor newsletters, speakers, or symposia designed to advise local organizations and officials on ways to overcome or avoid threats to preservation.
4. Serve as a sounding board for proposed historic preservation legislation and as supporters for needed legislative changes.
5. Coordinate activities scheduled by local societies. The Committee could also serve communities by organizing tours and annual events in different towns.
6. Compile and maintain a list of architects, builders, and craftsmen qualified to assist individuals and organizations with authentic restorations.
7. Implement the proposal for a Marine Heritage Area and promote it as a major attraction to the region's visitors.

● Consideration should be given to preservation through historic district zoning in the following areas:

1. Part of Colchester around the Town Green.
2. Fitchville in Bozrah.
3. Baltic in Sprague.
4. Hanover in Sprague.
5. Preston City in Preston.
6. Taftville in Norwich.
7. Bean Hill in Norwich.
8. Parts of the central area of Norwich.
9. Parts of the central area of New London.
10. Noank in Groton.
11. Parts of Mystic in both Groton and Stonington.
12. Old Mystic in Groton and Stonington.
13. The Village of Stonington.
14. Parts of Pawcatuck (Stonington) near the intersection of West Broad and Moss Streets.
15. The Village of North Stonington.
16. The Clarks Falls area of North Stonington.

● Historic preservation measures in the Village of Stonington should be given

the highest priority by town and borough officials, the Stonington Historical Society, and the residents of the Village. At the very least the Village should be protected by zoning regulations that will minimize the chances of undesirable land uses locating there. Under present conditions, incompatible land uses could quickly and easily destroy the quality environment that local residents have worked to maintain for so many years. Ideally, the entire Village area south of the New Haven Railroad tracks should be designated as a historic district and preserved accordingly. Virtually every block contains buildings which add to the overall quality and distinctiveness of the Village.

It has been said that tourists would overrun the Village if a historic district were established there. This is not likely to occur for several reasons. First, the Village and the surrounding area lacks the accommodations for large numbers of transients. Second, the lack of major commercial facilities, amusements, and recreation features makes the Village attractive chiefly to those interested in history and architecture. Zoning can keep out the types of land uses that would cater to and attract the average tourist and fun seeker. Third, geography will continue to partially isolate the Village from the mainstream of tourist traffic. In all probability the number of additional visitors drawn to the Village itself would not be a problem.

● Connecticut's enabling legislation for establishing local historic districts is deficient in several respects and should be amended to grant historic district commissions a greater degree of flexibility in the controls that may be exercised in a particular historic district. Three specific amendments appear desirable:

1. Each community should have the option of imposing controls over such visually important features as color, driveway pavements, and stone walls and fences. Such control could be highly important to the success of a historic district and completely acceptable to the affected property owners.
2. Local historic district commissions should be permitted to enact regulations to prevent a property owner from destroying a historic structure by simply neglecting to maintain it. This process of "demolition by neglect" has eroded many potentially fine historic districts and threatens others unless local commissions have the power to control it.
3. Proposed zoning changes or zoning



variances within 1,000 feet of the boundary of a historic district should be reviewed by the historic district commission before being acted on. Land uses not actually within a historic district but visible from it can adversely affect the integrity of the district. The case of the proposed hamburger stand near the Norwichtown Green best exemplifies this problem.

- The staff of the State Historical Commission should be enlarged in order to permit more extensive technical aid to local preservation groups. A team of experts representing the fields of history, architecture, structural engineering, carpentry, and local planning should be available to advise on all aspects of preservation. The present staff cannot possibly be expected to perform in an efficient manner the duties involved with administration, planning, and technical assistance.

The availability of expert technical advice and assistance can be of more long-term value to preservation efforts than financial grants. Sound decisions regarding historical authenticity, site considerations, and structural matters cannot usually be made by the average historical group, regardless of its good intentions.

- The Connecticut Historical Commission's inventory for the statewide historic preservation plan should eventually be expanded to include structures and sites submitted by historical societies at the mu-

nicipal level. This is not intended to suggest that such features would automatically be eligible for state and federal preservation grants, but, rather, that locally important sites and buildings will be added to the National Register. This would assure that they will receive due consideration in the determination of future highway locations, urban renewal projects, and other federally-aided projects.

- Although state and federal preservation grant programs do exist, the amounts of money funding these programs are not likely to make a significant impact on local preservation activities in the foreseeable future. The financing of programs and projects in this area will continue to depend primarily upon local contributions, but municipalities should make use of whatever state and federal assistance they are entitled to.

- Local historical societies should become members of both the Connecticut League of Historical Societies and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. These organizations can keep local societies continuously informed about various assistance programs and can provide advice and information on local preservation efforts.

- Since our historical and architectural heritage is of such importance to the region's culture and appearance, private groups and individuals should work closely with local officials to ensure that these features remain for the pleasure of future generations.



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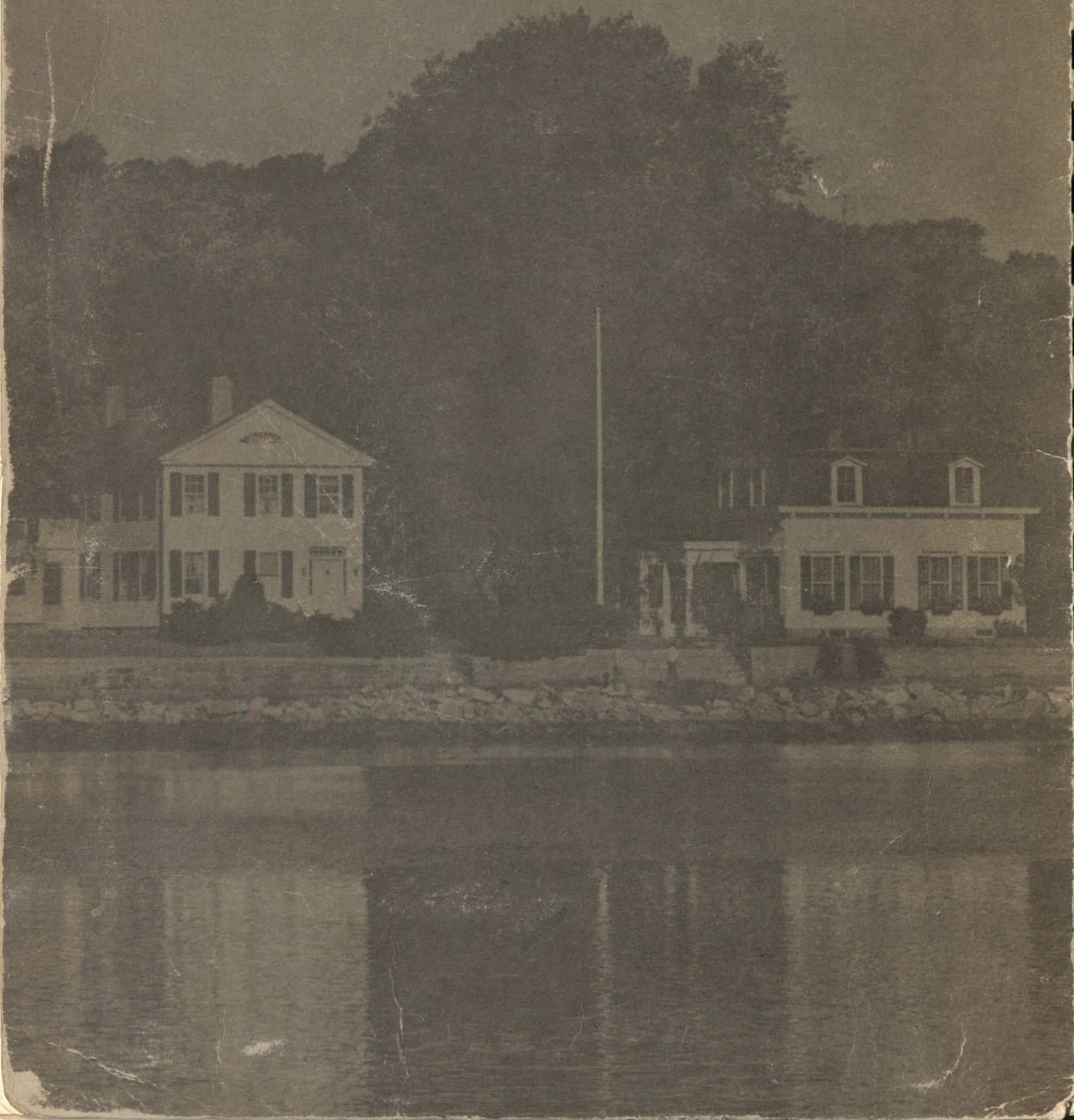
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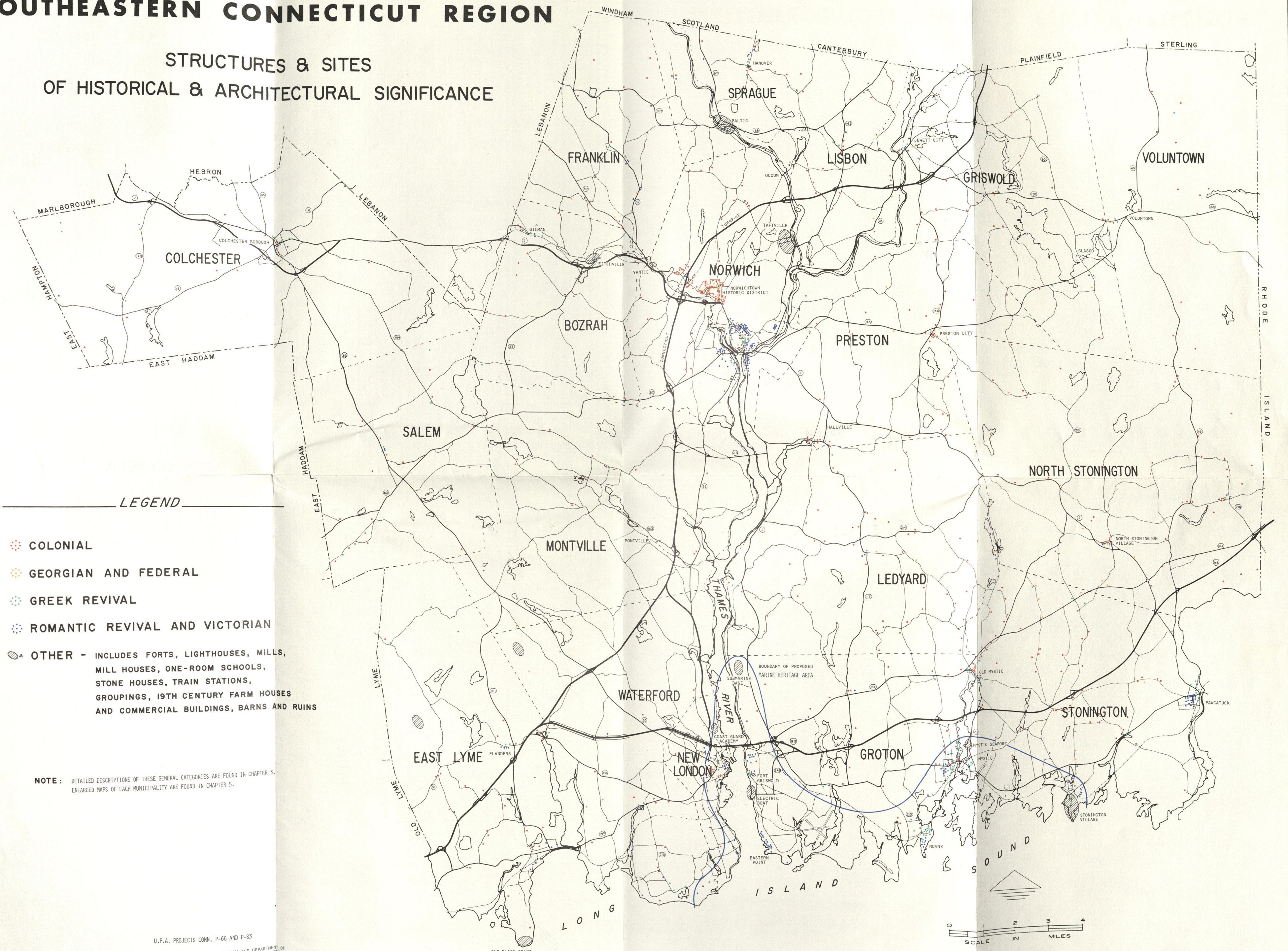
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# SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT REGION

## STRUCTURES & SITES OF HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE



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